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CHRISTMAS MORNING.

VALKENBERG'S NINTH CHRISTMAS.

THE Christmas in question was a very bright one, and a very clear one, but a very cold one. Far-distant hills stood out sharply, naked trees appeared to have travelled miles nearer, the roadways were crisp, the earth was flint-like, and the air frosty.

At a certain hour well along in the afternoon, but while the sun was still high and warmthless in a steel-colored sky, two young men, both twenty or thereabouts, pushed through a huge iron gate-way let into a high stone wall, and emerged upon the path outside. The gates shut to with a clang, and one man stopped full a minute to struggle with the rusty lock and secure it.

After this they both turned about and looked off to the ruddy west, at an object which arose high between them and the sun, and then moved off silently together in a predetermined direction toward it. Both are well-formed and manly, and, that they are hearty fellows, is to be seen in their manner.

They slip off well together, getting quickly into a brave, swinging stride and an easy step; knees and elbows well in, chests out moderately, heads up, and drawing in their breaths through their nostrils.

They are dressed comfortably and closely, each wearing a small hat and tolerably-light shoes, but carrying no canes nor throat-wrappings, those evil clogs on good walking.

The tall object, toward which they often casually look, is a good six miles away, and, had it been as much again, they would rather have welcomed the new distance than regretted it.

The air was liquid ice, and all the wide-spread landscape, still deeply flushed, lay quiet, brown, and frozen, except where a few thin columns of smoke arose from hospitable houses in the distance.

For a good half mile the travellers said nothing. For some reason silence was more grateful to both; perhaps the glory of the stillness made it so, or perhaps the faint peal of the bells of the village; but they were dull and blind to nothing. The pace was music to them, the air was health, their object was pleasure, and the day holy.

An accident, a flight of twittering birds, threw both their glances upon the distant, upright object at once, and it brought them to the one subject together, much as a magnet draws iron particles to itself.

In consequence, one of the two spoke to the other:

"Windham, I think I am in the best mood for Christmas visiting and dining. On other days you can go in ordinary and enjoy yourself, but I always fancy that on such days as this you want a little freshening and purifying before you can shake hands and sit down gratefully; and a Christmas dinner is not, or should not be, so much what you eat and drink as what you feel and give out in consolation and sympathy."

The other laughs:

"Ah, old boy, still as fanciful as ever; still as delightfully vague and indefinite, and still as good-hearted and generous. Perhaps you expect some such dinner and visit. I hope we may have it, and, as I understand you, I am with you, I'm sure. Is this host of ours, this—"

"Valkenberg," adds the other, by way of prompting.

"Yes, this Valkenberg; is he of that fine-grained sort that knows such differences? Could he feel the distinction of a Christmas or Sabbath grip from a week-day grip?"

"I'll have the grace to hope you're not laughing at me, Windham, and answer yes, indeed. Old Valkenberg, with his spectacles and cheery manner, is as great a lover of all such trifles as we two, egotists ourselves profess to be. He is a man with a secret or a partly-smothered volcano. There are thousands such, but few who cover it with a smiling face and a tranquil heart. You tell me you never knew him?"

"No; only heard of him when I was much younger. And what I did hear, or remember I heard, was a little hard on Valkenberg as a man. If I am right, there were whispers of a hard temper, a supercilious carriage, and an ugly heart. How was it?"

"Well, I'm afraid, true enough; and I suspect as much more, if possible. But I think a sudden rush of fortune did it, and, when the retributive blow came, it brushed off this evil growth, which I sincerely believe to have been unreal and false, and let the sun in at his honest soul, and made him what he is: He is a man to be loved, Windham."

"You are always finding such, Duffield."

(He pronounces it Duf-feld.)

"No. But I really can't help liking Valkenberg. His story hangs about him like a mournful picture. It shows out even in his smiles and his pleasantest words. It must have been a bitter burden in its day. I imagine you've heard it, eh?"

"Yes, I think I know something how it goes. He was a rich color-maker, wasn't he? A producer of the rarest and most beautiful and costly shades for decoration or the like. A chemist. And he had possession of a secret which he was working out. And this was stolen, with much money, and his great factory destroyed by fire at a moment when there was no insurance. Every thing seemed to conspire against him in a single hour, and to fall upon him at once, and it threw him off his feet at a blow. How near right is that?"

"Very near," returned the other, shaking his head; "but you forgot the deceiving friend who did it all. That was the deepest and most savage cut. It was a young fellow, led away by a wild harum-scarum girl. There's always a woman, always a woman. Ah, but it wrenched him, Windham; it was a torture that tore and burned, and the volcano I spoke of is—I very much fear is hate of this ruining man, Maasfeld. He keeps it down with a Christian hand of iron, and I hope it is now wellnigh smothered. He has built him a little cottage over the ruins, and so there he has lived for eight years—a changed man, and, to my mind, a great man."

"Philosophy," suggests Windham.

"Philosophy? No! No such poor pretence. He tells me he has none. He says the 'past,' meaning this matter, is as far past as childhood, and he dreams no more of it. But, I don't know. With a living enemy rioting on your wealth, and you comparatively alone, you must be an angel to forget. But he seems happy; he has a few good pictures, many good books, his pipe, his violin, and an object. I was on the point of saying 'poor Valkenberg,' but, if he had heard me, he would have made me say 'jolly Valkenberg,' and have hummed me a volks-lied."

"And so he has asked us to-day, Christmas.—Why Christmas, and why me?"

"Oh, as being my friend, perhaps. He has seen us together in some of our long jaunts. He is even a greater walker than we are. You should see his sticks. As for Christmas, Christmas is his one day; not as it is other people's day, but you'll see it's a day for him to get over, to surmount, to leave behind, and so he likes to get a good friend or two to help him do it."

At this they both cease for a moment in silence, conscious of the deepening cold and sinking sun. Duffield stops a moment to arrange the tie of his shoe, and this halts them both; but they soon go on again as before.

From this point, and for a long time after, they talk of all the fine things young men are apt to talk of; ambition, psychology, criticism, art, and the like. They are both full of positive ideas on religion, rather sophomorically expressed, and flounder a great deal about liberty and reform, and are by no means backward at Darwinism. To be sure, they both stumble badly, and put each other awkward questions, and return awkward answers, which awkwardness is rarely meant or comprehended by the perpetrator of it. They feel much better and larger for having grappled with such great subjects, and privately consider each other a nifty at argument, however good a fellow he may be in many other qualities.

By-and-by they cheerfully slip back to Valkenberg again, and proceed to talk him over more thoroughly. As a consequence, Windham comes to have a high regard for him (and curiosity withal), and expresses as much heartily, which pleases his warm-hearted, vigorous friend to that degree that he hopes they may like each other so much that there may be three of them.

The name of Maasfeld comes up again, but they avoid it; but dwell a little on his temptress, about whom Duffield says this:

"Know her, did you ask, Windham? No; for I was only twelve or thereabout when it all took place. But I remember her for a pretty woman, about twenty then, I should say. I think she loved Maasfeld well enough, but was cut off from her family, and a great deal of misery came out of it, and they have never heard from her since, nor him either, for that matter. She was of the tiger sort, and it is not far from here where she lived in great state, and all that, hang her!"

At a sharp turn of the road which happens when they are well along in their journey, and in close neighborhood to the huge, tall

object which looms before them, and, in fact, near the pretty gable of Valkenberg's house, they meet two or three country-people, comfortably wrapped up, and walking along, talking loudly, and beating their hands together. They have a holiday air about their manner and clothing, and they salute them with great good-will.

So taken up are the two young men with these that they are oblivious of a heavy carriage which swoops suddenly round the opposite sharp turn, until it is close upon them. They have time to notice two steaming horses in front, then a thrashing coachman, then a chilled, weakened face of a woman at the nearest window, which sinks suddenly back as their eyes meet it, and also an indistinct, upright heap of coats and great-coats beyond her on the same seat, and about which she has a supporting arm. Then it all vanishes abruptly within an iron gate across the way and among some huge, dum trees, almost before they have well rested their eyes upon it.

Duffield seems stricken with astonishment. He stands still, gazing after the carriage with a shade or two less of red in his face than usual, and then demands of Windham:

"Who was that?"

"I can't tell, I'm sure," replies Windham, promptly; "you look as though you can. You look frightened."

"I am, a little," returns Duffield, "and I think I do know who it is, by George!" His agitation seems to culminate in this, and he then asks, after a minute, "Did you see any one else, Windham?"

"A mere glimpse of a form, old fellow; nothing more."

This incident has such an effect upon Duffield that he goes on in silence, with a thoughtful and troubled face, while the other looks at him anxiously. Once he stops abruptly, and looks up a little more cheerfully:

"Windham, this is really curious. If I had not stopped to bolt that gate in the wall, or if my shoe had not troubled me, we should have missed the sight, should we not?"

"Yes, I think likely; yes, I am sure we should."

"And so am I; and, Windham, I am sure enough will come of our sight of that carriage in some way to convince us that the trifles of the gate and shoestring were not accidents but Providential interferences. Windham, something glorious or deadly is going to happen."

"Indeed!" said the other, with surprise. "You're getting mysterious, Duffield. But let us get along to Valkenberg's fire, for it's growing cold; though really, my dear boy, I hope Providence does not always go to work in so bungling a manner."

A few hundred more steps bring them to the pretty gable before seen. It sets back from the road, and is approached by a little gate let into a neat, brown, wooden fence, and which closes noisily behind them as they enter. There is a straight little path leading upward, with a little frozen stretch of garden on either side. Also some trees swathed in thick bandages, and long since brown and leafless; and again some rustic flower-stands, bereft of flowers and verdure, and sadly remindful of summer glories. The little house beyond is brown like all the rest, and, in the proper season of the year, may have been called a pretty box or a neat dove-cot, but, in the present winter, its ornamental scrolls and wood-work, with the slender pillars and cramped piazzas, make it appear just a trifle cold and dreary. Huge branches hover over it protectingly, and touch it in times of high wind, but now are motionless in the freezing air. Heaps of mouldering leaves are matted thickly about its stone-work for the purpose of keeping warmth within.

As they go up the path they become aware of an oppressive shade, and glancing upward they behold their landmark.

It is a monstrous chimney of frightful height rising into the calm sky from beyond the house. It is an old object to one of the two, but seems to have gathered a new interest for him, inasmuch as he stops with his friend and looks upward at it with his hands over his eyes.

At this moment the door of the house opens, and Valkenberg in slippers and dressing-gown comes out to greet them personally.

He does so with a hearty manner and smiling face, and they are friends on the instant.

He is rather a shortish man, of twice the age of either, is rather stout, bald-headed, and with sandy-grayish whiskers and mustache, all close trimmed. He wears spectacles, and is rather full in front.

A burst of warm and grateful air comes out with him, and they pass a low window, through which are seen a bright fire and many comfortable colors. They totally forget the bleakness of the outside in

the pleasant warmth of the inside, and in the sound of Valkenberg's voice.

"I am happy to welcome you," he cries, cheerily, and also implying it in the grasp of his hands. "Come in by the fire, I have a great one of sea-coal. I like that better than all others, Windham. It has a splendid glowing flame and roar, that all others want."

"A true holiday ring to it, sir," responds Windham, quickly.

"Ay, indeed, a true holiday ring. I fancy sometimes that winter days are meant for men to meet each other in, and so to become fast friends. Summer lets you free, but the cold forces you under a roof in close association, and you get closely and mysteriously bound together."

As they become acquainted and intimate with the little parlor, they begin to think highly of Valkenberg's taste. It vividly appears in the genial, reddish aspect of the room. The carpet, walls, furniture, and window-hangings, all go to make this pleasant effect, and the golden frames of the pictures are more bright and golden from it.

There are some handsome graceful bronzes set upon brackets, and some splendid books with covers of velvet. Among the paintings is a sullen, frowning head by Tintoretto, a gay self-painted portrait of David flaming with the fever of the Gironde, a delicate fan-painting of Europa with its gleaming shades of vermillion; and also a cold and chilly Tissot with its gray walls, drifts of dead leaves, and wintry skies of leaden vapors.

There is also a piano at one side, with its keys to the murky glow of a window; and again, a violin resting just within the light of the fire. This last Valkenberg raises tenderly and holds it proudly, so that they may catch the richness of its color. He regards it with deep affection.

"It is old, very old," he says. "It is a Joseph, and has been a sweet and faithful friend to me above all others. It is human, and I love it."

There is something in his tone which they notice further on, and recall as being a part and parcel of a certain manner and bearing.

He steps between them and cheerfully takes them by the arms and slowly walks about the room with them, laughing and telling them the stories of this object and that, and as if he enjoyed the rehearsals of such stories as they did their newness. He has a very gentle manner, yet a firm tone, and a definite way of speaking; he engages them, but never wearies them.

But there are about him, wherever he moves and whenever he speaks, certain subtle evidences of powerful springs, perpetually trying to force his lips to say what he would not, to make his eyes look where he would not have them, and to make his face put on expressions which he will not have upon it; but he struggles hard, and so keeps up a generous voice, a presence of mind, and a genial, hearty face, though at times his contest has a look of desperation to Duffield, who keenly notices.

He stops before a window from where they see his little lawn, and where they catch in a glance and in an instant the total, utter cheerlessness of the outside day, as it appears in the vapory breath of a passing man and woman, carefully muffled in the gathering shadows, in the stiff whitish ruts of the road, and in the quiet, chilled stagnation of all things.

They stop an instant in silence, and then he leads them suddenly away to look at a good picture of a scarlet-robed cardinal walking in the Borghese gardens, and holding an audience therein with some brightly-dressed courtier. Valkenberg looks at it and laughs, and makes some remark about papal tenure; and then quickly turns to pour them out some wine into slender glasses, which they drink standing in the firelight, chatting between-times. Duffield hopes sincerely that Valkenberg may hold his own with his antagonist, but he secretly trembles. By way of aiding him, he respectfully remarks: "One would say you could easily be happy here, and also thoroughly contented, Valkenberg."

"Yes, and I think I am. Happily there is no fear about the wolf, and as I have forgotten to dream of enormous wealth, as I have sunk it, strangled it, stifled it—I—I have only to keep some grand object before me. I have chosen a large one—and, I am vain enough to think, a grand one."

The springs got the upper hand for a moment, but he quickly calms again, and thinks how he shall put it. "I am aiming to popularize my own country in this." There is something in this simple declaration which strengthens him on the instant, and, as he follows

it out with others, he forgets himself, and becomes radiant with enthusiasm for the while.

"I aim to plant a graft of German literature, history, and science, in this rich trunk, and so bring the two great peoples together. I translate the noble German thinkers and interpret the great German poets. Americans are beginning to know me, and their splendid praise is pure happiness to me. I shall never be rich, I despise riches, I shall never cast my eyes that way again. I can be what is better, a benefactor! for what pure, religious good may not come of the intercourse of two such peoples, and I—I—the janitor who throws open the doors?"

Valkenberg's eyes glowed and his voice deepened, and they silently raised their glasses together.

He presently took them into a warm library, and showed them the works he had done, those he was to do, and those upon which he was engaged. It was to be the work of years, and had been the work of years—a labor terribly arduous and exacting, but with flowers and delightful charms at every step. Valkenberg put his arms over his work, piled up portentously as it was, and pretended to embrace it, and laughed while he did it. He gazed on his finished books proudly, on the coming ones eagerly, and on those as yet unfinished, with caressing affection.

"I tell you," he cried, "that I think of nothing else. It fills my mind and heart up to the brim. I tolerate no other vision, either of the present or the miserable, torturing past. My reward shall be eternal thanks, and with such I content myself; my hope and aim is the shape of a mouthful of air!"

As they turned from the room, he placed a kind hand on the shoulder of each in his happy way, and said:

"Look ahead beyond this life, Windham and Duffield, and trials and disappointments in this seem sadly trifling, and work the only pleasure."

Duffield's keen scrutiny of him puts this calm sentence down as being in some way the result of a self-deceptive conquering of his impulses, and he trembles at what he fears.

The twilight is now well upon them, and the little parlor grows finely comfortable and cheerful, more so than before. The firelight makes all things waver and tremble, and breaks upon the delicate glass on the table. Christmas holly and evergreen lie softly in vases, and the faint breath of flowers comes from over the mantel.

Here they negligently sit and talk with their backs to the dark, and grow cordial and friendly in the eyes of Windham, but more dangerously near to catastrophe in the eyes of Duffield.

It appears to him that a rapid stride is made toward this by the following outbreak from Valkenberg as he sits almost in obscurity. He begins it by a significant reiteration:

"I tell you, young men, I think of nothing else. My labor of to-day has grown over my old dreams, like moss and ivy upon a castle. It hides it, and is the living thing, while its secret is dead and passed. And still I had a dream—the dream of a poor boy, a poor young man, and an ambitious one. I slaved for it, I studied for it, I acted and planned for it, and, what is more—I prospered for it. I dreamed of getting back some old lands long since squandered by my forefathers."

Duffield watches him finger his glass, and wipe his lips with a napkin.

"I beheld them spring out of their old torpor and rust, and bloom again. I thought of the old house with its high spires and pointed roofs, its heavy walls and court-yards, its great windows with glass of a thousand colors, its tiers on tiers of halls and balconies; and I thought they might be peopled again. I imagined miles of terraces blooming with flowers and verdure; of gleaming statues planted in beautiful parks of graceful trees, of countless birds of dazzling plumage, of a time of rest and beauty. I imagined music to always live there with me and mine. I thought of the church I would build to give eternal thanks for it all; all the happy, peaceful vineyards, the calm rivers, the swelling hills, and mighty rocks. One grandeur was to overtop another, each charm to outdo the rest, and every single soul to be happier than all about it. Oh—oh—and it began to come; I began to place my foot on it, to breathe the air, when—"

The stem of his glass snapped and the bowl and foot fell upon the marble and shivered to atoms. Windham and Duffield held their breaths, while Valkenberg sat with his face rigidly to the fire, and with the arms of his chair tightly clinched in his hands.

After a moment of suspense there are signs of a breaking up of the spell in some movements of his body, and Windham feels encouraged to further it by speaking casually to Duffield, who answers. They carry on a little conversation for a moment or two, in low tones, and meanwhile Valkenberg comes back again and vehemently begs their pardon. They, in their turn, beg him not to mind it, and in a moment they are familiar again.

Duffield, however, is profoundly observant still, and is conscious that Valkenberg's hold upon whatever moves him is weaker, though he now struggles hard with voice and face to keep it down. He chats and laughs, and even goes to the extent of playing a pretty trifle on his violin, but still Duffield fears.

Windham follows suit to his friend and also talks. As he sits in his chair he can see through the window of the library, and he hazardingly speaks of what he sees, but in a tone which denotes some fear for his subject.

"I have heard a little about your great neighbor, sir, your chimney. It makes a great shadow."

"Ay, indeed it does," returns Valkenberg. "It is a great curiosity. Perhaps you would like to see it and stand under it. I have many visitors, and some go away a little frightened, for it has three echoes, and is tall, black, and damp. It is two hundred and thirty feet high, and vessels coming in from sea make great use of it."

Duffield would have kept them all back, but can do no better than to whisper to Windham: "For Heaven's sake, don't mention Maasfeld, nor speak of the old affair; he is on fire now."

It is thought best to clothe themselves thickly, after which they emerge into the biting air and turn a corner of the house, Valkenberg talking thus as they go:

"I keep it standing as a memorial, a great mausoleum of a great hope. I hope my books may make as wide a show to the country as this does to the town. I should be happy in such a case."

They come up to it suddenly, and are kept speechless for a little while, for its great proportions tower as much out of language as they do out of the trees and shrubs. It seems limitless, and is silent and gigantic.

All is dwarfed and belittled beside it. They can discern a jagged top, whence some bricks and mortar have been torn by high winds, and tremble at thoughts of a fall from it.

They enter at its base through two arches, rudely Gothic in their shapes, and stand oppressed by a cold, overhanging space. They look upward, and see a faint flush like a deadened shiplight. One ventures upon a call. It is thrown back on their heads in thunders, and they come bounding out to Valkenberg, scared and appalled.

He laughs a little, and says, quietly, "It is strong to-night."

He begs them to go back and try a few notes. They do so, and the place becomes resonant with strange quavers and tones, which circle round and fall down on them like avalanches. They hurry out again, nervous and unstrung. It has a strong element of mystery and ghostliness which is unbearable, but they go once more, and this time there happens a strange accident. They begin and call all they can lay their tongues to, from sheer nervousness, and are half deafened for their pains. They see Valkenberg with his hands to his ears, and he answers from the outside that he is trying an experiment—what experiment, he does not say.

They cease, and find themselves trembling, and they resolve to make one more trial, and then quit the place. They call out what first comes into their heads. Windham's impulse is to call the name of his friend, and Duffield's happens to be the name of the day. They shout, Windham a little behind:

"Christ-m-a-s!"

"Duf-f-e-l-d!"

They naturally dwell on the first syllables, and the last, pruned and obscured by the echo, come deafeningly back: "M-a-a-s-f-e-l-d! M-a-a-s-f-e-l-d! M-a-a-s-f-e-l-d!"

Duffield heard it, and put his hands to his ears and stared out at Valkenberg and exclaimed, "Good God, his name!"

"His name! his name! his name!" thundered the echo. Duffield leaped out of the place with a cry of terror, and Windham followed, dazed and confounded.

They hastily attempt to explain to Valkenberg, who stands motionless, but are confused and indistinct, and he does not understand them, nor does he seem to try to do so. He bids them follow him,

and he goes quickly back again to the house and they in his rear, trembling and feeling culpable.

Duffield now has much reason to fear for Valkenberg's strength. He dreads that the calm, present object of his life may sink and be lost under this fierce revival of the atmosphere of the old; and hence more undying hate of the spoiler and more harassing struggles with Fortune. In the interest of Valkenberg he hopes and prays this may not be so, as he foresees a recovery of the old spirit of grasping and antagonism, and a loss of all that is pure and noble in him now. So he calls to him repeatedly, but he is deaf and does not speak to them until he stands erect upon the rug in front of his fire and faces them, also standing, something in the character of culprits.

"Windham and Duffield, both of you, is it not frightful to find you've been dreaming and dallying for eight long years?"

They both afterward agree that there is an element of fierceness in his manner even in this first sentence, and which is plain enough in most of the others thereafter. They are both silent—more, perhaps, because Valkenberg catches up his thread before they can answer.

"And is it not singular to be shocked out of your dream on the very day of the year that you fell into it years before? I think it is intentional in the higher powers, and I accept it so." Here he swiftly raises his arms and lets them fall again with a motion of throwing something off his shoulders, and looks all about at his room.

A tinkling clock on the mantel strikes the hour of five. Valkenberg turns on it sharply and looks at his watch by the fire, and then restores it to its place with a smile, which looks unreal, and, to a certain extent, ghastly.

"Another mark of the higher power! Ten minutes before this instant on the Christmas of eight years ago, a white-faced man rushed at me and told me my property was in flames. It was a day when all the insurance expired at noon. I had not renewed it from oversight, and I was ruined in that. Ten seconds later I was stopped in my race from home by a crowd of white-faced men, my workmen, who declared I had been robbed. It was so, and I was ruined in that. I had a secret of my craft—a way of producing a heavenly blue which was beautiful above all others, and had the description of its production with the accurate weights and proportions all got from the imperial works at Sèvres. It was in a box wrapped in oil-skin and sealed. It was gone, and I was ruined in that."

As he enumerates, he gesticulates and rises in excitement. They interpose to calm him, but he overrides them.

"With that alone, I could have made a monstrous fortune, if the Lord had but left me a single sense, a single limb or finger unparalyzed. It was priceless, and my golden home, my wildest dream of wealth and luxury, would have followed its working out. After it was gone, I was helpless, I was poor, I was weak, I sank!"

He starts from his place by the fire, and makes a circle of the room.

"He was my friend—the only one to whom I opened my heart. He knew all I thought and hoped, and knew all on which I built my thoughts and hopes, and yet he deceived me—he deceived me!"

The faint light of the fire glows enough upon him for them to see and shrink at his face. For the moment, he is anathema. He has upraised arms, closed hands, a swollen throat, and an awful face. The Past is upon him with all its force.

Duffield's frightened thoughts recur to the vision of the carriage with its upright heap of clothing; but he waits a moment, still having an ill-defined purpose in his mind. Valkenberg chokes, but masters himself.

"And I—I to give up thus! I to be a bookworm, and to bury my life and manhood, and cheat myself because Maasfeld was a lie? Oh, and what a fearful lie!"

He goes thrice about the room, railing with a thick voice, and calling insanely on "Maasfeld! Maasfeld!" He stops before them, and demands why the chimney with its echoes called the name, if nothing was to come of it; and then goes on again, as if drawn into some sort of maelstrom, the vortex of which is near by.

His intent and desire on Maasfeld is highly dangerous at first, and they have a lingering fear that he may rush off in his delirium and find him.

He has now forgotten every thing but his ancient desire; the long-smothered wish has burst out again, and has him in its influence fully and completely.

It is this, then, which allows him to say this, not to Windham nor to Duffield, but to himself:

"Maasfeld! Maasfeld! Oh, that you would give it back to me, I could forget it all perhaps. You were cruel, but I might forget. I might—who knows?"

He casts himself into a broad seat, and buries his face in his hands, and mumbles to himself, while Duffield slips out, quits the house, and rushes off over fields, roads, and fences.

Half an hour passes; perhaps a little more.

Three figures struggle along the whitish roads. Two on the outside, supporting and half lifting another between them. They hurry, as much as possible; the centre figure seeming eager beyond his strength. He has an arm about the neck of a woman, and one about Duffield's. They are all stopped short in their tracks, as he meets the sight of the chimney in the moonlight. He shrinks, but gathers up, and goes on with his face upturned toward it, as they go.

Duffield passes in advance, and leaves the woman soothing and cheering the other in the portico. He enters the apartment lightly.

He finds it in a glare. Valkenberg is standing before the fire erect, pale, and motionless. He holds a bundle of thickly-written paper in one hand, and with the other he presses his forehead. He is surrounded knee-deep with his books, thrown hither and thither, and scattered before him and behind him. The fire is flaming with consuming paper, and the hearth is blackened with cinders.

Windham holds him gently by the arm, and is expostulating, or, rather, imploring:

"I beg you, sir—don't destroy that. It must be saved. It is your life; the other cannot be. It is grand and noble. It has peace and contentment in it. Its object is above all others. Love it, cherish it, and do not throw it away. Men can thank you for this; it is a work of the mind and soul. The other is far out of your hand; it has been taken away from you, and there is nothing left."

"Nothing left!" repeats Valkenberg with the air of a weary man; "I wish I might be sure of that, I might be braver if I were not tortured by the thought that he might some day bring me something back—my secret, perhaps."

"But he will not, sir," said Windham. "He has gone out of your sight; he is buried. Think that he is so, and turn back to your work once more. Come, help me with the books, sir."

Valkenberg drops his handful of papers, and catches his hands behind him, and so stands for a moment, with a little despair in his face, a little irresolution, and, latterly, with a shade of firmer feeling. It slips away, however, and he seems bewildered and lost in clouds again. He whispers to himself, while Windham and Duffield listen eagerly to catch it.

"Oh, Maasfeld! Maasfeld! even you might help me; even if you told me with oaths and curses that all, all was gone, I would thank you—and forgive you—now."

His head sinks, and he shivers from head to foot like a man in a piercing wind. Duffield slips away noiselessly, and admits the two people in the portico. Windham is obliged to struggle against an impulse to cry out, first, at the miserable, racked, and shambling figure in front, and at the woman who props it from behind. He recognizes the weakened face of a few hours before, and feels that he is in the presence of the responsible two.

The man's face is like parchment; his eyes like glassy balls; his neck shrivelled, and to be compassed by a hand; his body is a bundle of fleshless limbs with a spectre for a trunk, and languid, pendant shadows, for arms. They come forward together, Maasfeld moving his lips, and staring at the central figure, which is still bent and buried in itself.

It suddenly raises its head with a shout which makes the glasses ring. Maasfeld slips forward, not kneels, but settles, about his feet and knees, with a face at which statues would have mourned.

The woman covers her face in her hands.

Valkenberg looks down at the heap, and catches its eyes with questioning looks. The heap comprehends, and it shakes its head this way and that. Valkenberg whispers a monosyllable, calmly and distinctly—"It?"

A silence follows. Maasfeld swallows once or twice, and answers, also in a whisper:

"Gone; burned with all the rest. I threw it into the fire."

A long-drawn sigh is Valkenberg's answer, after some seconds. He waits; his life, up to eight years ago, passes in review, while the

clock ticked, the fire glowed, and the four witnesses beheld him. It has come to this. Nothing. Then the new life, of eight years' growth, passes. It slips on; it reaches the present day, the present hour, the present moment—now!

It shall go on, as it was born and lived—in forgiveness. He stoops, and gives Maasfeld both hands. They are grasped and hugged; and a gesture calls his wife within reach of them. She treasures their touch even above Maasfeld. A precious moment comes and departs, and is planted deeply in the after-memories of two.

Duffield steps forward with his strong arms; the heap is drawn up, and set upon its tottering feet, and is urged slowly backward. Valkenberg follows it with his eyes until it fades in the obscurity, and is lost to his sight forever. And the other obscurity, deeper and more mysterious, which is also drawing about it, closes in soon after, and shuts it tightly in for the longer forever we know not of.

Valkenberg looks slowly about him with a smile.

"I thought something would come—Duffield and Windham—and I am grateful, deeply grateful, that it has come. I foresee fame for me, and a joyful pleasure while earning it. I take my books to my heart again. You congratulate me? Thank you both, a thousand times! Now, come, let me call in our Christmas; it shall be my happiest one, and my ninth birthday."

ALBERT WEBSTER, JR.

TREE AND SERPENT WORSHIP.

A LECTURE BY JAMES FERGUSON, F. R. S., BEFORE THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN.

THE speaker introduced the subject by explaining the difficulties which arose in treating of it, partly in consequence of the reckless manner in which a certain class of antiquaries had theorized regarding serpent-worship, but more because, as a result of this, all the better class of critics had been deterred from meddling with what had become the laughing-stock of sober-minded persons, in consequence of the absurdities which had been there engrafted upon it. Except one work, by Böttiger, on the "*Baumkultus der Hellenen*," no serious work had been published in Germany, bearing on the subject; while in France nothing had appeared in elucidation of the worship of either the serpent or of trees.

The case was different in England: a whole literature had sprung up, dating from the visit of King James I. to Stonehenge in company with his architect, Inigo Jones; and from their time, Dr. Stukeley, Colt Hoare, Geoffrey Higgins, Bathurst Deane, and many others, had published volume after volume on the subject. Almost all these works had, however, been based on a passage in the twentieth book of Pliny's "*Natural History*," in which he related the formation of an *anguinum*, or serpent-egg, by an assembly of snakes on a certain day, adding that the egg was considered an important charm by the Druids. On this slender basis, Stonehenge, Avebury, and all the megalithic temples of Britain, were called Druidic, and serpent-worship admitted as the established faith of our forefathers. It was in vain to hope to attack successfully such a castle in the air, unless some new and tangible evidence had been brought to bear on the subject. This, however, has now fortunately reached us from India, and the object of this evening's discourse is to explain its form and relevance.

The first monument bearing on the subject was the Temple of Nakhon Vat, in the centre of the now desolate country of Cambodia, which was discovered about ten years ago, almost accidentally, by a French traveller, M. Muhot. It is probably not too much to say that, taken altogether, it is perhaps the most remarkable temple in Asia, being one of the largest, and is unsurpassed by any in the extent and the beauty of its form, and the marvellous elaboration of its sculptural details. On examination, it was found that this temple was erected by an Indian colony from Taxila, as late as the thirteenth century of the Christian era, and was dedicated wholly to the worship of the serpent.

The next piece of evidence was brought to light even more accidentally. While looking for objects to cast for the Paris Exhibition of 1867, a large collection of sculptures in white marble was discovered buried under rubbish of all sorts in the stables of Fife House, then occupied as a temporary museum attached to the India Office. On

examination, it was found that these had been sent home some twelve years ago, by Sir Walter Elliot, having been principally excavated by him from the Amravati Tope, a building of the fourth century, situated about sixty miles from the mouth of the Kistnah River in the Zillah Guntoor.

The building, to which these marbles belonged, was originally enclosed by a circular screen one hundred and ninety-five feet in diameter, or exactly double the dimensions of the corresponding screen at Stonehenge, the height of the two circles being very nearly the same. Within this was a procession-path, twelve feet in width, and then an inner screen only six feet in height, but even more elaborately ornamented with carvings than the outer enclosure. The interior of the Tope, inside these two circles, was occupied by a number of buildings, all of which have been destroyed, and their materials used by a local *rajah* in building the town of Amravati, at the end of the last century.

On examination, it was found that the Tope had been erected in the fourth century, and was in all essentials a Buddhist monument; but its sculptures proved that the worship of the seven-headed Naga, or serpent-god, was nearly as important and as prevalent when it was erected as that of Buddha himself. Another circumstance nearly as unexpected was, that the worship of the tree was equal in dignity to that of the serpent—the three forming a trinity for which we were by no means prepared.

The next piece of evidence which came to light was in the form of a series of photographs of the Sanchi Tope, near Bhopal, in Central India, made by Lieutenant Waterhouse, and a still more interesting series of drawings of the sculptures of the same monument by Lieutenant-Colonel Maisey.

The sculptures of this monument are earlier than those of the Amravati Tope, and date from the first century of our era. In them, Buddha himself never appears as an object of worship, though the monument is essentially Buddhist. The serpent is worshipped, though only occasionally; but the tree is the prevailing and prominent object of adoration.

The light thrown on the subject, by the examination of these three typical examples, was so distinct and clear, that many minor indications, which had hitherto been overlooked, were now found to bear directly on the subject; and the general result was, to prove what had only before been suspected,* which was, that before the preaching of Gautama, or Sakya Muni, who died 543 B.C., the prevailing worship of the aboriginal tribes of India was tree and serpent worship; that the former was tolerated by Buddha—the latter, abolished; but in later times, when the prophet's influence became weaker, that the two had cropped up again, and had, in later times, obscured, and indeed nearly obliterated, the reforms he had introduced.

Mr. Ferguson then proceeded to point out what he believed to be the key to half the problems of Indian mythology or art; this was, that the country was now, and had in all historical times been, inhabited by two perfectly distinct and separate races of men: one, aboriginal, so far as known, and of distinctly Turanian race; the other, Aryans, who migrated into India some two thousand, or it may be three thousand years before the Christian era, and who, down at least to the seventh century B.C., completely dominated the aboriginal races.

The language of the Aryans was Sanscrit—their religion, that of the Vedas; and it may be asserted, almost without limitation, that all the literature of India belongs to this great family of mankind; but, like Aryans all over the world, they had no great feeling for art, and erected no permanent buildings.

The aboriginal Turanians, on the other hand, had no literature, but an innate love of art, and built as instinctively as bees. Their religion, like that of all similar races, was ancestral. They had no distinct idea of a future state, but supplied its place by metempsychosis; and, as before stated, their principal outward symbols of worship were serpents and trees.

The religion which Buddha taught was not a reform of the Vedic faith of the Aryans, but a refinement of the less intellectual religion of the Turanians. Serpent-worship was abolished, and with it human sacrifices, to be replaced by the utmost tenderness toward all living things; tree-worship was not only tolerated, but encouraged; the ancestral tumulus became a relic shrine; ascetics were formed into

* "*History of Architecture*," by the author, vol. II., p. 448.

monastic communities; and, what is even more important for our present purposes, simultaneously with this upraising of a Turanian race, men began to erect permanent buildings in India. There does not, so far as we now know, exist in all India a single building, or any carved stone, that dates from the days of Aryan supremacy; but, three hundred years after the death of Sakya Muni, Asoka, then emperor of India, did for Buddhism what Constantine did for Christianity six hundred years afterward. He made it the religion of the state; and with him begins also the history of stone architecture in that country. The old caves that belong to this age, and all those down at least to the Christian era, are literal copies of wooden forms; and it is not till after the time of the Sanchi's gate-ways, which were erected in the first century after Christ, that the architecture ceases to be mere imitative carpentry, and becomes appropriate to masonic forms.

Having established these points in so far as India was concerned, the speaker then turned to the forms which this worship had assumed among the Turanian races in other parts of the world.

The earliest written notice of the worship of trees and serpents is that contained in the second and third chapters of Genesis. With the knowledge we now possess on this subject, it appears reasonable to assume that the curse therein recorded on the serpent was not against the reptile as such, but the expression by a Semitic people of their abhorrence of what they considered a degrading superstition, which it was necessary should be anathematized and swept away in order to make way for the purer and higher worship of Jehovah, which it was the great object of the writers of the Pentateuch to introduce. In so far as the Jews were concerned, the abolition seems to have been successful; but when they come in contact with the Canaanites, it again crops up occasionally—as, for instance, when the Lord is said to have appeared to Moses in a flame, issuing from a sacred tree, on which occasion the prophet's rod was turned into a serpent. A still more remarkable instance was that of the brazen serpent, which Moses erected in the desert to cure the Israelites from the bites they were suffering from. Though we lose sight of this image for a while, it appears that the Jews burnt incense and made offerings to it down to the time of Hezekiah, and that it was, during these six hundred years, kept in the temple with the *asherahs* or groves, which were the symbolical trees of this form of worship. It reappeared after the time of Christ in the form of the sects of Ophites; and, in so far as we can trust coins, prevailed in all the cities of Asia Minor in which the seven churches were first established.

Both forms apparently prevailed in Babylon, but only tree-worship has been found in Assyria; while in ancient Egypt the adoration of the serpent apparently only formed one item in that wonderful pantheon of animal-worship which formed so singular and so marked a part of their mythology.

In Greece we find a history and mythology precisely analogous to what we find in India—an old Turanian race of Pelasgi, with ancestral, and tree and serpent worship, superseded by an Aryan race symbolized by the return of the Heraclidae, and all whose earlier myths represented either the prevalence of this form of worship, or the struggles of the immigrant Aryan races to suppress it. When once they had obtained the political supremacy, however, the Hellenes seem to have become more tolerant.

The Pythonic oracle at Delphi was adopted conjointly with the Druidic oracle of Dodona, as the principal sanctuary of the country. The oldest temple of the Acropolis at Athens was erected to enshrine the tree of Minerva, which was given in charge to the serpent Erechthonios. But still more remarkable than these was the worship of Æsculapius in the form of a serpent in the grove at Epidaurus, which prevailed till after the Christian era. Among the demigods and heroes the serpent association was as frequent as with the greater deities, as is exemplified by the stories of Cecrops, Jason, Theseus, Hercules, Agamemnon, and generally with the Homeric fables.

Rome borrowed her Æsculapian serpent-worship apparently from Epidaurus, though Italy had a centre of that faith at Lanuvium, and it afterward became so favorite a form under the empire that the number of tame serpents became a positive nuisance.

The Germans apparently worshipped trees, but never serpents; but, in Scandinavia, the Finns and Lapps, and other Turanian tribes, brought with them both tree and serpent worship to such an extent that, notwithstanding the long supremacy of Northmen of a different race, both trees and serpents were worshipped in Esthonia as in Scan-

dinavia in the last century, and the faith, as exhibited in the Edda, is as near a counterpart of what is found farther East, as could well be expected, considering the distances of the places and the very different channels through which the description reaches us.

From Scandinavia the faith seems to have reached the northeast coast of Scotland, but not to have penetrated south of the Forth in that direction. Its traces are very few and indistinct south of the Tweed, and, what are found, seem to have come by a more southern route from some other source. Both the Welsh and the Irish, however, have many traditions of serpent-worship, which, if treated reasonably, might throw much light on the subject; but, except the legend of the Virgin Keyna, at Stanton Drew, they are at present all of the vaguest form.

Leaving these indistinct traces to fade into the Western Ocean, the speaker next pointed to Africa as the great centre of tree and serpent worship of the present day. The faith of the kingdom of Dahomey, on the Gold Coast, is essentially the adoration of trees and serpents, accompanied by ancestral worship, and human sacrifices, and female soldiers. In fact, Africa preserves, in full vigor and perfection at the present day, all those characteristics which we see only dimly reflected in the myths of other nations.

In the New World, too, the worship of the serpent—apparently there connected with that of the sun—certainly prevailed extensively before that continent was discovered by Columbus; and, with forms so like many of those found in Asia, that frequent attempts have been made to prove that what we find there is a form of Buddhism. This cannot, however, be sustained; but it certainly seems to be a form of that primeval faith on which Buddhism was based, and out of which it arose in India.

In conclusion, the speaker pointed to certain forms of Dolmens, stone-circles, menhirs, and such-like rude stone monuments, found in India, identical in form and purpose with those found in Africa, in Brittany, and nearly all over the world wherever a Turanian people can be traced. These are not necessarily old, though some of them may be of any age; others were certainly erected in India, within the limits of this century, and are undistinguishable from the older examples, showing how persistent certain forms of faith are, when once adopted by certain races of mankind. Among these, the Turanians are certainly the most instinctive and least progressive of any.

It is this last fact which gives unity while it adds interest to the whole subject. In tree and serpent worship we have the oldest known form of faith, and belonging to the most ancient people of whose existence we have any knowledge. It is now found generally in a nearly fossil state, underlying the Semitic and Aryan strata, which have been superimposed upon it. Occasionally, however, it crops up in out-of-the-way corners of the world, fresh and vigorous, and tells a strange tale of the persistent unchangeableness of certain races of mankind, and still more strange irradicability of certain forms of superstitious faith.

PICTURESQUE AMERICA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRY FENN.

A FLORIDA GARDEN.

A GARDEN on the banks of the St. John's River, Florida, if any thing, must be anomalous. In the Northern idea, a garden is impossible; for the grassy bank, the umbrageous shade, the purling brook, the delicate vegetation, are not known to a climate where the sun pours down its fiery heat only a little less intense than under the tropics. A garden, to the Northern mind, suggests a cool, shady retreat; but a tropical garden has no place where the fiery rays of Sol do not penetrate. In the South, the house and its veranda are the sheltering spots. A Southern garden is, therefore, if any thing, a conservatory of sensational vegetation, where things strange in themselves by accident become isolated and petted, and grow often even more luxuriant than in their native wilds.

This idea is illustrated by the towering cactus which occupies the foreground of our picture. This anomalous plant, made up of the stringing together of fleshy leaves, which carry on their surface the sharp prickles for protection, and send out their buds and complete their part without the medium of twigs or branches, is ordinarily an humble occupier of the soil—its habit being, to push a few leaves

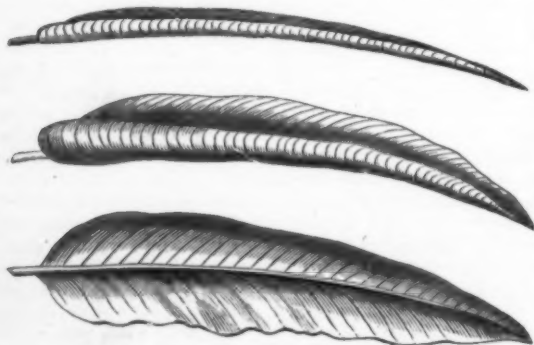
upward, and then shed one after another, something after the fashion crabs dispose of an offending claw. Each discarded leaf, however, sets up growing for itself, and thus the cactus, in a modest way, usurps large tracts of favorable soil, forming an undergrowth more impenetrable to man and beast than walls of wood or iron.

But our stray cactus in a Florida garden had no room for horizontal extension; if it thrived at all, it was compelled to grow upward, and an intelligent womanly hand, to aid the struggling plant under difficulties, trimmed away the exuberant and useless buds. The cactus, true to its instinct of self-preservation, and with a logical conclusion of a first-class intellect, met the demand by concentrating its irrepressible vigor on fibre, instead of the usual pulpy mass. Carrying out the idea to practical uses, it clamped naturally-weak joints together with thongs as firm as hemp could make them, and thus undertook an ambitious existence. The success has been wonderful, and we have, by the accident of an unfavorable birthplace, a little judicious culture, and an untiring vegetable ambition, probably the loftiest prickly-pear-cactus ornaments existing, and they are a subject of wonder in the isolated garden of Pilatka.

It was our fortune once to occupy a house, beside the door-steps of which, though we were ignorant of the fact at the time, were hidden away a number of banana-roots. In the winter all that marked the place was a quantity of yellow, blasted leaves, as if some fire had swept over and withered them on their parent stalk. With the prevailing airs of spring, suddenly came from this repulsive stubble-heap evidences of germinating vegetation, and there at last shot up, in different places, what appeared to be sharp spears of the most livid green. Gaining strength, they elongated and reached upward, even while under our special observation, and, as the heat of the semi-tropical sun increased, the decaying "trash" fairly palpitated with the struggling, rapid growth of what were the roots of the banana, which, from their vigorous wakefulness, seemed to have hibernated rather than temporarily died in the winter months. A few hours made a perceptible difference in their growth, and a day brought forth a new revelation—and thus the brave work struggled on toward perfection.

We found, when the banana was at its full growth, that, what appeared to be the trunk, was almost wholly composed of the united stems and foliage. On the top of this herbaceous stalk, some nine or ten feet in the air, the wonderful leaves, of a most delicate green, and averaging two feet in width and six in length, radiated from one point, reaching out horizontally a short distance, and then, turning downward, formed a parasol, or bower, of the most exquisite beauty, which was solid enough to afford equal protection from rain or sun. The cone of buds, made up of a succession of rings of flowers, one above the other, completed the structure. The arrangement of these blossoms, obtruding from their soft purple sheaths, enchanted the eye by their exquisite arrangement, varied colors, and exhilarating odors; but they did more, for they protected and covered the newly-born fruit.

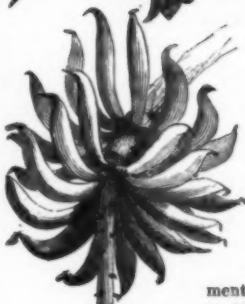
Familiar as we were with the fact that the leaf was not only the most important part of the plant, but the only living part, the root,



Growth of the Banana Leaf.

trunk, and branches, being only fibres extending from the leaves, still we had no conception of their varied functions until we studied them

in the magnificent foliage of this wonderful tree. The ingenuity and wisdom displayed in the growth of a leaf six feet long can never be



Growth of the Banana Fruit.

fully realized except from observation. This leaf does not develop from a minute inception, and then go on growing until complete, but, startling as it may appear, it is born of the balmy breezes of a single morn.

Growing first as a long, slender shoot, it towers upward several feet as stiff as a rod. If you examine this vegetable line, you will find it apparently a pithy substance, which in time is to harden into solid wood—but such is not the case. When the hour arrives, by some wonderful transformation, the solid green stalk turns into a roll of what is the long banana-leaf. At the appointed time a line of demarcation appears along the entire length of this green stalk, which line, under the coquetting influence of the gentle breeze, soon unfolds itself from the parent-stem, and, to your astonish-

ment, one-half of the gigantic leaf displays itself. This accomplished, you are further surprised to find the remaining half of the leaf has been rolled up alongside of the stem, but now, released from imprisonment, it, in turn, unfolds, and the perfect, magnificent foliage, as if by a miracle, glitters in the sun.

As these great leaves one by one added their vitalizing power to the general growth, the banana actually swelled and heaved with internal power. The sun played upon their surfaces, and ripened the crude juices, preparing substance for new leaves, and at last the fruit. As the plant advanced toward perfection, it became an active, living thing, pumping, respiring, and laboring, impelled by an unseen but irrepressible force. The limited number of gigantic leaves were doing the surface-work of the thousands which so gracefully adorn the apple and the oak.

The magnificent bouquet of blossoms finally disappears, and the fruit has formed on the stems. The leafy canopy is now complete, and, receiving the sap that surges

upward from the ever-swelling roots, with most subtle chemistry extracts from the ever-enriching sun such aroma as belongs to the growing banana-fruit, imparting to the juices, as needs be, the flavors of the orange, the vanilla, the lemon, and the pineapple.

The cone of expected ripened fruit now towers aloft, and grows in size and importance daily. There it stands, an apex worthy of such a wonder of the wealth of Pomona, boastful indeed, a very braggart in its promise. But soon the tasteless, spongy heart is filled with nutritious juices—the object of its creation approaches consummation. Vanity gives way to utility, and the towering cone of the banana, as if conscious that meretricious display is no longer necessary, gracefully turns its head downward, and thus modestly completes its round of life.

The wonderful fruit of the banana, by a law of its existence, remains untouched by insects until it is perfectly ripe. If it is picked green, it comes to perfection in the shade of your house. It is because of this provision that we have bananas as delicate and fresh in taste and perfume in New York as they have them in Jamaica or Matanzas. The leaf has always been celebrated by the Eastern poets.

The enervated and dreamy sons of the banks of the Ganges, with a delicacy beyond precedent, called the foliage of the banana "Adam's fig-leaf," two of which were large enough to clothe him as in a garment.

Florida is the home of aquatic birds, and the wildest by nature often grow strangely tame by coming in frequent contact with human beings. That the blue-heron should live and thrive, and quaintly ornament a Southern garden, is no wonder. We once made the acquaintance of one of these mysterious but splendidly-formed and richly-colored birds, which made its stopping-place in a country grocery-store, situated on the banks of a Louisiana swamp. The crane, when the cold weather came on, had a fondness to be near the fire. Once comfortably located near the genial heat, it would hide one long leg away under its breast feathers, and stand, if undisturbed, on the other for long hours, with as little evidence of life as if it were a stuffed specimen for an ornithologist's collection.

A SCENE IN ST. AUGUSTINE.

The quaint old Spanish city of St. Augustine affords more material for the artist than possibly any town on our continent. The style of the houses—half Moorish, half Christian—the favorable colors of the stone of which they are built; the hospitable character of the climate, allowing such a mingling of tropical and temperate vegetation to flourish side by side; the long reaches of hot-looking sand, washed by the waters of cerulean blue—afford everywhere plentiful elements of the truly picturesque. In the suburbs of St. Augustine, contrasting with the low houses, quaint roofs, and projecting chimney-tops, is to be seen a date-palm. There are groups of these trees in other places of the vicinity; but their forms are confused by their proximity, and their surroundings are not in all respects interesting. But one individual stands out with the marked significance of a gigantic sentinel. A peculiarity of the trunk of the palm is that it has the same diameter at the top as it has at the base. Its long shaft is ornamented with a capital about six feet high, clothed with branches some fifteen feet long, the leaves of which are arranged like the feather part of a quill. These palms, so essentially tropical in their character and appearance, vary also from the vegetation of northern climates in every intrinsic quality, as well as shape. The heart of the palm is pith; the heart of the northern tree is its most solid part. The age of the palm is legibly written upon its exterior surface; the age of the northern tree is concealed under a protecting bark. The northern tree, though native of a cold, inhospitable climate, is adapted to give shade; the palm, with its straight, unadorned trunk and meagre tuft of leafy limbs, gives no protection to the earth or to man from the burning tropical sun.

It is, after all, not in these "genial climes" that we meet with what might be called "social vegetation." The sands of Florida are not covered with those shady nooks that so charm the mind in less hospitable regions. What requires the fierce, burning sun, thrives; but under no circumstances does the luxuriant grass which clothes the hill-sides of sterile New England ever carpet the ground upon which fall the ripened fig or the perfect date. We have, therefore, the novelty of a "Florida hay-stack." The material has been gathered with care and industry; but it was too weak to stand alone, and it is twined around a stout bludgeon, and may, in its abundance and its artificial support, reach the circumference and height of a flour-barrel. All advantages and disadvantages in Nature have their compensations. The Northern farmer cuts the luxuriant grass and clover, and under the process of curing them the air is filled with aromas of new-mown hay, as sweet as ever swept over Ceylon's spicy isle. If the date, the banana, and the fig, are denied to the toiling son of the North, there are the apple, the plum, and the peach, for his comfort and support. Still the South is really the "hospitable clime." Its productions are more spontaneous; a little labor meets with most liberal reward; the expense of clothing is nominal; the air is seldom else than mild; mind and body both are encouraged to repose.

Oranges, with their bright, evergreen foliage, their fragrant wood, and delicious fruit, eclipse all other fruit-growths we know of, in presenting at the same time, and on the same limb possibly, the first appearance of the most charming of all buds (especially sacred for the bridal wreath), with every stage of progress up to perfection.

T. B. THORPE.

POWELL VARDRAY'S LIFE.

BY CHRISTIAN REID, AUTHOR OF "VALERIE ATLMER."

II.

THE next morning Mrs. Dering felt that the departure of the young teacher could not in safety be longer delayed; so, putting all other engagements aside, she drove into Kingston for the purpose of seeing Madame Girod. Since it was impossible to return before evening, she left the reins of management in her mother's hands, and for a time Mrs. Murray proved equal to the important responsibility. As the day wore on, she kept Romeyne and Powell very cleverly apart; but in the afternoon a riding-party was proposed, and, after her sanction had been given, she found, to her consternation, that no one but the young Georgian was bold enough to ride a certain beautiful mare which belonged to Romeyne, and the rider of which would be honored with his attendance. As in courtesy bound, he had offered the animal to Miss Murray; but that young lady's neck was dearer to her than even a prospective baronet. She looked at the royal creature, who was champing her bit and tossing her head with such fiery impatience, and, after counting the chances for and against her safety of life and limb, declined to run the risk. Then Romeyne turned to Powell, who was standing near.

"Are you afraid to ride her, Miss Vardray?" he asked.

The girl looked up with a gleam of rapture in her eyes that answered him before her lips said:

"No."

"Will you ride her, then?"

"Yes, gladly."

She had not meant to be so frank, but nature is sometimes stronger than conventionality, and the smile that came over his face was the reward of her candor. In five minutes she was mounted, and in another five the party was in motion. They started without any definite point of destination, and so it was not strange that the different couples were soon widely scattered, having taken whatever direction chance or the inclination of the moment prompted. Romeyne and Powell were among the first of these deserters. They brought up the rear of the party, and, when a road branching off among the hills seemed beckoning them into a region of enchantment, there was nothing more easy than to heed the invitation. They looked at each other, smiled, and turned their horses' heads. After that they saw no more of their companions. They wandered on and on, and when, at last, the silence of the scene and the lateness of the hour made them pause, they found themselves in the midst of the mountains, with wild, tropical forest stretching around on every side, and hardly a path beneath their horses' feet. What was their position, whence they had come, in what direction lay their homeward road, neither of them knew. They only realized that, in the delight of mutual companionship, in the glory of heaven and the beauty of earth, they had recked little of their course, and so—lost it.

When they came to their senses, the sun was going down, and they knew that night would fall upon them as soon as his broad red disk had disappeared. Just then, however, the scene was of paradise. The air was full of myriad perfumes; the sky was a vault of sapphire, the distant ocean a plain of azure; the broken, picturesque peaks of the mountain-range were crowned with plummy sentinels and girdled with a wealth of foliage, while heavy palms drooped over their heads, and the rocks and glades about them were enamelled with a thousand shrubs, each of which, in less favored climes, would have been a rare exotic. Everywhere opened the broad, succulent leaves that abound in the tropics; everywhere shone the golden and crimson glories for which botany has no name; and through the deep green of a jungle on one side was caught the sheen of flashing water, as a swift mountain-stream leaped down a height of some eighty feet into a rocky bed below, and sent up a shower of spray like a silver mist. The whole was so heavenly that, when they paused, Powell scarcely noticed the gravity of her companion's face, or his anxious look around him. She was drinking in a deep draught of the beauty lavished before her, when he spoke:

"I am very much afraid that we have lost our way. This is no road at all that we have been following, and I really have very little idea of our bearings."

"We shall have to turn back, I suppose," said she, carelessly.

"It is a pity, for we shall be late in reaching Flamstead. We can turn back—can we not?" she added, with a sudden accession of interest and concern, caused by a glance at Romeyne's face.

"I am not sure of it," said he, slowly, as, turning in his saddle, he looked in the direction from which they had come. "I am afraid that, if we do turn back, we shall not be able to reach the road," he went on. "Unfortunately, I hardly noticed the way at all, and there are no landmarks in my memory. The scenery is so much alike that we may have wandered Heaven only knows how far."

"What are we to do—keep straight on?"

"I dare not do that, with the night so near at hand."

"Where is the middle course, then? We cannot stand here until daylight."

"No—not if we can help it. Will you hold my horse a minute? Perhaps, if I climb that hill yonder, I may see something to guide us."

He dismounted as he spoke, and, bringing up his horse, gave her the rein. As she took it, she could not forbear urging him to haste, for she had been long enough in the tropics to know that the sun would sink in a few minutes, and that darkness would almost instantly follow. He did not need the recommendation, but went off at once, breaking through the luxuriant undergrowth, dashing over the torrent, and springing up the precipice down which the cascade tumbled. Soon she lost sight of him; but she could hear his voice when he spoke, and now and then a large stone fell crashing along the hill, making her tremble for his safety. Suddenly the sun went down, sinking like a shot into the distant expanse of ocean, and, simultaneously, the fan-like foliage began to stir with the breath of the land-breeze, while a chorus of insect voices made all Nature animate with their rejoicing. At this moment, Powell heard a shout that made her look eagerly upward. She saw Romeyne on a point of rock far above her head; but he was dwarfed to almost pigmy dimensions, and his voice, as it floated down, sounded strangely distant.

"I can see nothing," he said—"nothing but the mountains and the sea. I fancy that Flamstead is in that direction" (he pointed southeast), "but I cannot tell, and the country is too broken for sight."

"But is there no other house to be seen?" Powell asked, anxiously, for the situation began to break upon her in a far from pleasant light.

He looked round in every direction, using his hand as a telescope, then answered, slowly:

"None."

"Do you see any road?"

"Not even a path."

"Oh, what shall we do?"

"We must keep up our spirits, in the first place, and, if necessary, we must bivouac out all night, in the second. Would you be afraid to do that?"

"I should prefer to go back to Flamstead."

"Ah! so would I. Well, it is growing dark, and I may be some time in reaching you—so I had better come down. I think I see a way out of our difficulty. I recognize a landmark over yonder, and, if we can only keep straight and reach it, we shall be all right in an hour or two."

"Do you mean to come down where you went up?"

"Necessarily—since that is the only practicable point of descent. It is confoundingly slippery, too. I only hope I shan't break my neck—that would be unpleasant for you."

"Don't talk so heedlessly; and pray take care."

"Can you see me?"

"Yes, quite plainly."

"Kiss your hand to me, then; and now—*en avant!*"

He waved his own hand gayly, and then swung himself over a point of rock. After this, Powell could not see him any longer. The luxuriant foliage hid him from her sight, and, though she strained her eyes to pierce through the dusk, it was impossible to follow his movements. Then the horses grew restive, and she had some trouble in quieting them. Before she entirely succeeded in this, there came a sound that chilled her blood—a sharp exclamation, an ominous crashing of a heavy body through the dense undergrowth, a dull fall, a deep groan, and then an awful silence.

For a moment the girl sat stricken with horror, then she raised her voice and called Romeyne's name; but no answer was returned.

She waited a moment, and called again—still no answer. Then she sprang from her saddle, left the horses to go where they would, and, plunging recklessly into the thicket, made her way to the spot where he had ascended. It took her some time to do this, for her long habit was much in her way, and the water-course intervened; but on she went, recklessly, through the prickly shrubs, over the foaming cataract, forward despite all obstacles, despite her torn dress and bleeding hands, until at last she reached her point of destination—the foot of the hill. Then she paused, and gazed earnestly around. Even at noonday, the spot where she stood was dim and dark with the shade of overhanging trees; now, in the dusky gloaming, the shadows that gathered there were almost unfathomable. Still, after a moment, her eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, and she could distinguish, in form at least, the objects surrounding her. On one side was the silvery sheen of the water-fall; on the other, a gigantic banana rose like a sentinel over the heads of the lesser trees, and flung its broad leaves against the treacherous rocks of the steep ascent. The trunk of this tree was not three feet from the cascade, and, as Powell stood beside it, a spray of the falling water came like rain in her face. Once again she called, and now a faint groan answered her. Guided by this, she sprang forward, and in a moment was kneeling by a prostrate figure that lay on the verge of the stream, half in, half out of, the foaming water. The silent depths of forest echoed with weird distinctness the wailing sound that broke from her lips as she bent down and lifted in her arms that stricken head.

"My love! my love!" she cried, in tones that might have waked the dead, "can you not speak to me? My God! are you killed?"

No sound answered her, not even a groan. The head which she supported fell heavily over her arm, and the strong young form lay helpless and motionless with the leaden weight of insensibility. After a moment, she bent down and laid her ear over his heart. At first she could not tell whether it beat, but gradually she caught the slow, deep throbs, and knew that life still held the citadel. That knowledge was like an elixir of vitality to her, and seemed to fill her with a strength and energy that must have been lent from Heaven for the time. She strove to draw him up from the water; but the first movement brought forth such a moan of pain that she was obliged to desist from this attempt. Then she looked round; cordial there was none, but Nature's great restorative was near at hand, and she sprinkled his face with water until it was evident that he would revive. When this was apparent, a thought suddenly struck her, and she plunged her hand into his pockets, searching for what she found at last—a small flask, containing French brandy. She first tasted this, then held it to his lips, and poured a slender stream down his throat. In an instant, the effect was visible. He drew a deep, gurgling breath, opened his eyes, strove to raise himself, fell back with a sharp cry of pain, and lay still for a moment, panting heavily. After a while, he said, slowly:

"Powell, are you there? are you near me?"

"I am here, my love, my poor darling," said the girl, whose arms were round him, and whose sobs were choking her, as she kept them back, and strove to answer calmly.

"How did you"—a pause and a gasp—"reach me?"

"I don't know. I heard you fall, and I came—that is all. Are you much hurt? Oh! do you think you are much hurt?"

"I cannot tell. Wait a moment—let me lift myself and see. Sweetheart, hold my shoulders—help to raise me if you can. There—now—O my God!"

It was no mere exclamation, this last, no mere utterance of an ordinary appeal, but a soul's great shuddering cry over an agony too great for endurance. After it there followed a stillness, and Powell knew that he had fainted.

She did not faint herself, she did not even shed a tear. Indeed, in that moment she proved the heroic nature of her love, by the strength it gave her above her own weakness. She knelt by him, chafing his hands, bathing his face, pouring brandy as well as she could between his clinched teeth, and striving by every means in her power to revive him; but no sound came from her lips, no throb of her anguish found outward expression. Once only, she paused and looked upward. Through the drooping, plume-like foliage, the brilliant constellations of the southern heaven gazed down, shedding their mellow splendor even into this dark spot, and shimmering fitfully over the silver cascade. Save the rush of water, all around was full of the strange awe and silence of the night—that silence in which we seem to hear the

great heart of Nature deeply beating. Sounds there were, but they could scarcely be analyzed or described—distant, fitful voices of the forest that deepened rather than lessened the significance of the solitude. Powell felt that she was utterly alone—alone with none but God to aid—and out of the very desperation of despair came courage. The great soul rose up bravely to face the exigence, and after that she never faltered, even to the end.

At last Romeyne slowly came back to consciousness, and once more opened his eyes into those that, full of wistful pain, gazed so tenderly upon him.

"Sweetheart," he said, faintly, "bend down."

She bent down, and he kissed her thrice as passionately, but more softly, than he had kissed her hand the night before. Then he told her to lay his head gently on the ground.

"Why?" she asked, much pained at this. "Why should I not hold it?"

"Because you must go back to Flamstead," he answered. "When I was up there"—he glanced to the hill over his head—"I saw what our best path would be, and I think there is light enough for you to follow it. I cannot move. You must leave me here, and send for me. Listen now, and let me tell you the route—"

But she would not listen—she cried out at once on the cruelty of this.

"I will not go," she said. "If I could find the way a hundred times over, I would not go. How can you bid me do such a thing? How can you think I would leave you here suffering and alone? If I could bring help, it would be different; but it would require hours at least, and you all alone—oh, I would die sooner than go! You are cruel—cruel to try to send me from you like this!"

"My darling, it is for—" he stopped as he was about to say "your own sake." He knew this was the last argument in the world to move her; so after a moment he added—"it is for the best. Do you think it is not happiness to me to know that you are here, to feel your arms around me, and your hand upon me, but—but it must not be. Powell, my own, my own, you must go!"

She understood him. She understood how he thought of her even in his great extremity; and how, for her own sake, he was willing to send her from him. She knew, too, that he wished to spare her what might be a vigil of death, and in a moment her soul nerved itself for any endurance.

"You are thinking of me," she said, calmly, "but there is no need for it. Here—now—the world is less than nothing to me, and you are all. If I could help you by going, I might force myself to leave you. But there is no question of that. The best help I can render you is to stay by you, and I shall stay. Arthur, my own love, be merciful—let me do it in peace."

He smiled faintly. He had said his say, and was too weak to urge her further.

"Stay, then," he murmured. "But it will be very, very bitter to you."

After this the hours wore slowly on—broken only by such strong wrestlings with pain as would have torn the girl's heart if she had seen the veriest stranger suffer them, yet on which she looked without a murmur. She held the quivering form, wiped the streaming brow, moistened the parched lips, and gave the brandy as he directed—all without a single falter. Then in the intervals, when he could talk faintly and brokenly, she listened and answered more like an angel than a woman. Love made her, for the time being, almost divine, endowing her with a strength, a wisdom, and a tenderness, that in herself she could not claim. In these few hours of mingled agony and bliss, she lived her life—all that was ever granted her. He was dying; the summons had come in the full glory of his manhood, and he was going, he was almost gone, into that realm of dark shadow where only faith can pierce and love can follow. She knew that, but she also knew that he was all hers—that the world put no claim between them here, that heart was bared to heart at last, and that out of her arms no human power could take him now. They belonged to each other. He had told her that the night before, but the sense of it did not come to her till now—now that he was dying in her arms, all alone in the wild forest. Gradually his mind began to wander, and he talked of an English home that his eyes would never see again.

"If I could only have taken you there, my darling," he said, with a sudden return to consciousness. "But this may be best. We have tasted all the sweetness of the cup of love, and we are spared any of

its bitterness. Bitterness might have come, you know—even to us. I wonder if I am going, Powell? I wonder if it is because I am not myself that I feel so strangely content—so strangely sure that it is all right?"

"God only knows, love. God grant that indeed it may be all right—for you!"

"Sweetheart, you won't forget me soon?"

"Forget you!" What a low, pitiful cry it was. "Arthur, my only love, if I could go with you, I would—even into the arms of death."

"Thank God, you cannot, then, for life is sweet, and you are young. Darling, I shall not see you when you are old."

"No one ever will," said she, with strange calmness.

"You think so now, but—ah!"

It was one of the fierce paroxysms—the very fiercest that had been—and Powell almost thought it was the struggle of dissolution; but after a while it passed, and then she heard him whisper under his breath a fragment of the grand old "Dies Irae." "*Salva me, fons pietatis*," he murmured, and she caught the words. For the first time—and yet she was not a heathen—they made her think of his soul.

"O Arthur," she cried, "shall I not pray for you?—shall I not ask God to have mercy on you?"

He murmured something unintelligible, but which sounded like assent; and, without changing her position, she poured forth her soul in a tide of passionate supplication. The whole strength of her undying love went into it, and never before had the silent forest hearkened to such an appeal as now went forth, piercing the infinite spaces of eternity to the very throne of God. Suddenly she stopped, for there was a change which even in the darkness she perceived. What it was she could not analyze, but she felt at once that the end was at hand.

"Arthur, Arthur," she cried, wildly, "are you going?"

He muttered something brokenly, and lay for a moment in a stupor. Then he started, and a smile swept over his face—a smile which even in the faint starlight Powell caught—and he murmured something of which she heard only one word—her own name. With that name still on his lips, a strong shiver seized him, the breath fluttered—ceased—the eyes closed—and the girl knew that she was desolate.

When Powell came to herself out of the awful blackness and blankness that followed, she was lying in her own room at Madame Girod's. Every thing around looked so quiet and so familiar, that for a moment she almost believed that she had waked from a horrible dream—but it was only for a moment. The next instant, memory rushed over her—rushed not singly and by degrees—but suddenly, and in one awful whole. In a second, she remembered every thing, felt every thing, and, with a low, moaning cry—a protest, as it were, against life—she turned her face from the light, and buried it in the pillows.

At that cry, the German teacher rose quietly from a seat behind the bed-curtains, and advancing laid her hand on the girl's brow. She started, for it was cooler than she expected. Then she leaned over and spoke.

"*Liebchen*, do you feel better?"

The voice was very sweet, and Powell opened her eyes. She had never fancied this woman much—indeed, she had taken quite a dislike to her, in the quick, impatient fashion of youth—but now she read such earnest kindness in her eyes, that the sore heart opened at once to receive it.

"Better!" she cried—then, with a burst, "Oh, why did you make me well again? Why did you not let me die?"

"Child," said the German, gravely, "life and death are in God's hands. Were you so ready to go to Him, that you can talk like this?"

"I shall never be more ready; and I would have gone anywhere with Him. Oh, *Fräulein*, tell me where he is buried."

The *Fräulein* looked grave; but she also looked sad and infinitely pitiful. "Do you mean Captain Romeyne?" she asked, at length.

"Whom else should I mean? Oh, my poor love! He died in these arms, and I—I must live on, and never see him again."

"Died! My poor child, are you sure of that?"

"Am I sure? *Fräulein*, what do you mean? Did I not see him die?—did I not feel the last quiver of life that passed over him?—did I not—oh, why do you ask me such a question? Why do you look at me so strangely? *Fräulein*, it cannot be—" She raised herself, and

caught the teacher's arm, gazing the while passionately and wildly into the eyes that regarded her with such infinite compassion. "Speak!" she gasped. "It cannot be that he is *alive*!"

"Yes, he is alive."

The girl strove to speak, strove to question, strove evidently to say "Thank God!" but strength failed. Her hand relaxed its grasp on the teacher's sleeve, her eyes closed, her head sank back—she had fainted. Weeping softly, the German applied the usual remedies; and, as the swoon was alight, before long it yielded to them. Then, when the dark eyes once more opened, there was a question in their depths, and, when the lips unclosed, it came rushing forth at once.

"Fräulein, will he recover? Oh, God bless you for such news! But tell me—if he will ever be himself again?"

"He will recover certainly; it is said, indeed, he is much better now."

"And where is he? When can I see him?"

The teacher toyed nervously with the tassels of the bed-curtains, and looked away, avoiding Powell's eyes, and gazing out of the window.

"You can't see him at all," she said, at last. "He is gone."

"Gone!"

"He sailed yesterday for England."

This time no swoon was kind enough to come. On the contrary, the startled eyes opened wider and wider, with incredulity in their gaze. It seemed, indeed, as if they could not take themselves from the teacher's face, until the expression of that face repeated the news so sharply told. Then there was a cry—a low, pitiful cry, as of one wounded unto death—and the girl once more sunk back and buried her face from the light. This time she tasted the full bitterness of desolation, and, tasting it, cried out for death as a release.

But death came not at her desire. Slowly and by degrees, life flowed into her veins, and beat in her languid pulses. Slowly the duties of existence thronged back upon her, and she rose up to meet them. She did so with a strange, stunned quietude, a sort of dead apathy, the feeling and the bearing of one in whom Fate had spent its last blow. She did not think she could ever suffer another pang, and so went on her weary round, until one day all this false quiet was suddenly shattered, when the news came that the vessel in which Arthur Romeyne sailed for England, having met with adverse winds and storms, had gone down at sea.

Not long after this, Alicia Murray came one day to see the young teacher, and from her Powell received an assurance which she would gladly have gone in sackcloth and ashes all her life to gain—the assurance that the man, for whom she had suffered so much, had not deserted her willingly, or even knowingly. When he was found helpless and insensible, a message had immediately been dispatched for a cousin of the Romeyne family, who was acting as British consul in one of the neighboring islands. When this man arrived, his first resolution was to take Romeyne at once to England. Mrs. Dering, who inspired the idea, supported him in its execution, and the young man was removed to the vessel while yet unable to oppose, or even to understand, any thing that was in progress. In this state he sailed; and it was due to Mrs. Dering again, that all Kingston, having heard of his wonderful recovery, believed that he had gone of his own free will. The plan was well enough laid; but, whether it would have succeeded in its final result, was never known. God stretched forth His arm of power, the winds and the waves rose up to do His bidding, and all was over. The good ship went down, the ocean-tides swept over the heart that might have been so true, and yet again might have been so false; and all love, all hope, all suffering, was at an end forever.

Here, also, ended Powell Vardray's life. In all the years of her existence, she never lived again. Yet these years were quiet enough, and in one sense—the sense of duty fulfilled and work performed—even happy. She never murmured at their length or their sameness. She had lived her life, and that seemed to suffice. Yet, as she once told Arthur Romeyne, she did not live to grow old. Before that time, the summoner, who comes to all, came to her. A terrible fever decimated the island, and, in the midst of panic and dismay, she nursed the sick, tended the dying, and even helped to bury the dead. She gave herself no rest, either night or day; and, when all was over, when the pestilence passed, and health came back to those whom death had spared, she sickened and died. By her own request, one side of the stone which marks her grave bears this inscription:

"Ich habe gelebt und gelebet."

CHARLES LEVER.

WRITERS of fiction may be classed in two general divisions; didactic novelists, and novelists whose aim is simply to amuse. True, didactic novelists are often amusing, or intend so to be—for example, the long roll beginning with Dickens at the head of the list, and descending to the drowsy writers of commonplace religious fictions. But the novelists who set out simply to amuse, appear often to shun a moral as they would a damning blight upon their work. Teaching by fiction is surely one of the noblest uses of genius; and even amusing by fiction—the endeavor of a writer merely to while away a pleasant hour of his reader's vacant time—though of a far less exalted, is not seldom a charitable, and as well a highly-worthy aim. Of didactic romancers, the highest grade are those who inspire noble thoughts, noble emotions, and a practice of the greater virtues—who enter into and influence for good the lives of those upon whom they exercise power. Then come those who correct popular errors, who lash social shams, who expose public abuses, who denounce unjust laws. Next after, we place those who teach history, the lighter sciences, or manners and customs, by fiction; who impress facts while elaborating imaginary plots. Of novelists whose modest ambition it is merely to amuse, the higher rank is due to those who employ purity of thought and of diction; who shun what disgusts, who excite the innocent pleasures of emotion, and whose scenes and surprises are such as innocence may enjoy and refinement approve.

If our estimate is just, the novelists of the first rank are few indeed. For we may place none so high, who do not succeed—succeed beyond cavil, by general consent—in their undertaking. Many a favorite, over whose pages we have lingered with delight many a time and oft, must be sacrificed and placed after, possibly, those whose higher aim must be unwillingly conceded. Shakespeare (if we hold him a novelist), Dickens, George Eliot, perhaps three or four others in the long roll of English-writing authors, are all that can be claimed as having reached the highest goal in this branch of letters. Walter Scott, Washington Irving, Cooper, Bulwer, can only be placed in the third rank of didactic writers. Scott was the eloquent eulogist of a splendid chivalry and a powerful aristocracy. Irving was the prince of the literary graces, essentially a Scott nurtured on a new soil. Cooper taught history and customs, and nothing more. Bulwer is sometimes didactic as a relater of history, sometimes a novelist to amuse, while always uttering grand abstractions as often false as true.

CHARLES LEVER, though a man of graceful and varied learning, evidently a careful student and a keen observer of men, is not a teacher by illustration. The nobler uses of his art are not those to which he has devoted his pen. He stirs none of the higher emotions; impresses no needed reform; very rarely gives a glimpse of history, and, when he does, there is no instruction, for the facts are hardly recognizable from the liberties which he takes with them. No more are social abuses an object of his attack, at least in his fictions; he is not wanting, indeed, but is not great, in the subtle arts of irony and ridicule, in which Thackeray was the great English master, and which now and then flash with superb effect from the pen of Charles Reade. It is true that in some of his essays—which have given us a new and wholly unexpected insight into the man—he has a caustic word now and then for social shams and political blunders, and does really appear to be teaching his readers on this or that phase of the hour, whether social, political, or literary. He leaves his fiction to become, under the garb of Cornelius O'Dowd, the sage, dryly-witty, and often satirical mentor in *Blackwood*, chatting on books, on our American war, on a court fashion, in a way to show us—perhaps intended to show us—that there is really more in his head than scraps of dashing Irish dragoons, and ridiculous adventures in the petty court of Gerolstein. But when we get him back to fiction again, the old rollicking, thoughtless, hap-hazard manner of character and description reappears; the old harlequins are before us once more, with a "Here we are again!"

Leaving behind the novelists who are teachers, no English novelist of this generation, or the generation before this, has maintained a more steady fame, been more successful in the amusing novel pure and simple, or more zealously worked in the field which he chose for himself, than Charles Lever. Who has not read and reread, with constantly-recurring mirth, following with breathless and painless ex-

citement, the erratic course of the dashing characters, convulsed by their mishaps, infected by their jollity, envious of their triumphs—who has not thus enjoyed the tremendous adventures of Charles O'Malley? We think of the creator of this production much as we do of Marryat, who wrote "Japhet in Search of a Father," and Cockton, who wrote "Valentine Vox," and Lover, who wrote "Handy Andy"—we think what a genial, hearty, fine-spirited gentleman he must be!

There are many evidences in his works of Lever's origin—the true Irish wit and mercurial temperament betray themselves on every page. He was, in fact, born in Dublin, in the year 1809, being thus three years older than Dickens, and consequently in his sixtieth year. His early predilections, or the choice of his parents, were for the medical profession. He entered his name at Trinity College, Cambridge, as a medical student, was a tolerably regular attendant on the lectures, in due course receiving his degree of M. D. At the university his social qualities and good-fellowship were more conspicuous than his scholarly application and attainments; his vivacity and wit made him universally popular, and an indispensable ornament at the festive tables of his fellow "medics;" while he stoutly met, with keen tongue and brisk retort, the chaffing which the English students were wont to give him, owing to his Irish origin. He studied light literature as well as *materia medica*, and was noted for a characteristic which has often been remarked as also belonging to Dickens, that of perceiving at once the ludicrous side of every person and incident.

His medical course at Cambridge over, Lever repaired, as sons of well-to-do gentlemen were wont to do more frequently then, perhaps, than now, to a German university to polish off his professional education. He chose Göttingen, leading there a pleasant, not too laborious life, showing himself apt at his books, and not less so, we may be sure, at the frolics and orgies of the students, and finally carrying off the medical degree from this school also. He returned to England with the intention of entering upon practice; had hardly settled down again, when the terrible visitation of cholera in Ireland occurred, in the summer of 1832. Lever was young, enthusiastic, and had carried

everywhere with him the love of his own country. He entered ardently upon the hospital service, and ere long was appointed superintendent of one of the largest districts in the north of Ireland, which included Londonderry, Newtownlimavady, and Coleraine. The dashing young doctor brought not only his professional skill, but also cheerfulness and a lusty energy, to the aid of the poor sufferers, and even in the midst of these horrid scenes kept up a light heart, and did not neglect the social amenities. He was really of most valuable service to the medical staff, and proved himself a physician of skill and ability. So highly were these qualities appreciated, that, when the cholera at last subsided, he received the appointment of physician attached to the British legation at Brussels. He entered heartily into the society of

that bright and gay little metropolis of a kingdom hardly formed;—was known for his sprightliness and *esprit*, popular with natives and foreigners, and proved himself a thorough man of the world. The duties of physician to the legation were rather honorary than arduous or lucrative; and, while performing them, Lever hit upon the happy idea of striking "a new vein" in fiction. He began to write, as a serial, a story of Irish military life and adventure, which his publishers thought so good, that they engaged Hablot Browne—immortal "Phiz"—to illustrate it. Phiz was at this time also engaged upon Dickens's stories. This first novel was "Harry Lorrequer;" and it is not surprising that it

achieved an immediate and gratifying success. It was, indeed, a new vein in fiction which he had discovered. No one had previously occupied a field in which there was so much that was rarely and racily humorous, and which only actual Irish experience could cultivate. It was, in some respects, not unlike Fielding's novels, in giving prominence to adventures and mishaps of every-day life; and likely enough Lever may have derived a hint from the great novelist of the last century. But the scene, the characters, and mostly the incidents, were unique. "Harry Lorrequer" was speedily followed by a prolific succession of stories similar in design, all characteristic of the author's tastes and bent, yet sufficiently varied to sustain remarkably the popular interest. "Charles O'Malley" was certainly the *chef-d'œuvre*; the gallant and dashing captain is one of



CHARLES LEVER.

the individualities of English fiction—as marked, after his manner, as Dominie Sampson, Dick Swiveller, or Major Pendennis; and his adventures capped the climax of all the adventures which Lever had in such store to relate. Next in popularity, and perhaps in merit, was "Jack Hinton, the Life Guardsman;" and following in close order were "Our Mess," "The Dodd Family Abroad" (in which the author digresses somewhat from his favorite field, but retains all the sparkle and dash of his wit), "The O'Donoghue," "Arthur O'Leary," "Roland Cashell," "St. Patrick's Eve," "The Daltons," and "Con Cregan," which is called an "Irish Gil Blas." Many of these books were illustrated by Phiz; and we cannot help thinking what a large debt of gratitude those authors who were illustrated by this great delineator owe to his genius. What would "Charles O'Malley" or "The Old Curiosity Shop" be, without those illustrations with which we are all so familiar? They are part and parcel of the stories, and illuminate them with new meanings. The great success with which his stories were received induced Lever to enter more decidedly upon literary pursuits, and, retiring from his post at Brussels, he became the editor of the *Dublin University Magazine*, the principal periodical published in Ireland. In this appeared as serials several of his novels, as well as essays on various political and social topics. During the three years that he occupied this position, he was an indefatigable worker, and under his management the magazine reached a high degree of prosperity. On resigning, he betook himself to the Continent, and conceived the romantic idea of occupying an old castle; he hired one in the picturesque region of the Tyrol, and resided there for some time, writing and exercising hospitality. Thence he went to Florence, continuing here his literary labors, and mingling freely with the English residents.

He wrote "The Knight of Gwynne," "Tom Binks of Ours," "The Martins of Cro'martin," "Davenport Dunn," "Maurice Tierney," and "Sir Jasper Carew;" and produced anonymously what is now regarded as one of his best works, "The Diary of Horace Templeton."

In 1858 Lever entered upon what may be called his third profession. He was appointed by the Earl of Derby vice-consul at Spezia, on the Italian coast opposite Genoa, where he remained for nine years. A vacancy occurring in the British consulate at Trieste, in 1867, Lever was promoted to that post; and there he is still residing, in his consular capacity. The retirement and leisure which his Italian residence has afforded him, have enabled him to pursue his writing, which he has fairly divided between essays and novels. Among his later fictions have been "Barrington," "Lattrell of Arran," "A Day's Ride;" "A Life's Romance," and "Sir Brooke Fosbrooke," the latter of which he contributed as a serial to *Blackwood*.

In 1864 and 1865 appeared a striking, racy series of essays in *Blackwood*, under the *nom de plume* of "Cornelius O'Dowd," which attracted wide attention, and for a long time defied the public curiosity as to the identity of the author. The surprise was very general when it transpired that Charles Lever wrote them. "Cornelius O'Dowd upon men and women, and other things in general," was in most respects as unlike the adventurous and bull-perpetrating O'Malley as any thing could be. All sorts of subjects were treated with an odd mixture of farcical humor and worldly wisdom. The author proved himself to be imbued with strong opinions, with deep-rooted prejudices, with a keen power of observation, and an abundance of cheery but none-the-less caustic irony. He also proved himself a Tory of the bluest and most crusted order. He made a poor return for the welcome which his novels had received in America, by joining in the ignorant ribaldry and bitter contemptuousness with which *Blackwood* railed against the Union cause in the days of the rebellion. In one of his O'Dowd essays, on "The Fight over the Way" (*Blackwood*, vol. LX., No. 1, p. 57, American edition), he spoke thus: "There are two madmen engaged in a struggle, not a single maxim nor rule of which they comprehend. Moving cavalry like infantry, artillery like a wagon-train, violating every principle of the game, till at length one cries checkmate; and the other, accepting the defeat that is claimed against him, deploring his mishap, and sets to work for another contest." Such was O'Dowd's enlightened estimate of the American "vulgar, commonplace row." He forgot the English wars which lasted, in that tight little island, for generations. The range of subjects which O'Dowd treated were as various as his wit was plenteous, as may be judged from these: "Travesties;" "Going into Parliament;" "Continental Excursionists;" "Italian Finance;" "The English Inquisition;" "Thrift;" which are taken at random from the series.

I may close this sketch with a very just estimate, in brief language, made of Charles Lever by an English writer: "In addition to lively pictures of battle-scenes and romantic exploits, he has a rich, racy, national humor, and a truly Irish love of frolic. His heroes all have a strong love of adventure, a national proneness to blundering, and a tendency to get into scrapes and questionable situations. The author's chief fault is his often mistaking farce for comedy—mere animal spirits for wit or humor." Thackeray parodied him to the life in "Phil Fogarty; A Tale of the Fighting Onety-Onth. By Harry Rollicker"—which was one of his "Novels by Eminent Hands."

GEORGE M. TOWLE.

BROKEN DOWN.

YES, that's him—that rusty feller,
With the played-out umbrella.
You wouldn't take him for much, now, would you?
I reckon that's so. From his queer looks, why should you?
Well, you're out. That old chap
Carries under his cap
More larnin' and all sorts of knowledge—
Greek and such-like—than many a college
Could brag of. He's been a'most everywhar,
He has, that old chap standin' thar.

He began as a doctor of laws—
Yes, sir, that's what it was—
In a fust-class high institution down East thar,
Boston, or Hartford, or somewhar—at least thar
'S a story of that sort told
Round there by some old
Chums which knew him in them times. Just so!
He had a weakness—'twas liquor. You know,
Sir, how rum will pull a man down,
And the doctor—well, he lost his gown.

Had to get up right sudden and go,
And, I tell you, the blow
Hurt him bad; felt ashamed like, he did, and broken,
And thought every little word that was spoken
Had him for a target. That's it!
Folks don't wait to be hit
When suthin' inside makes 'em feel
They've done wrong. Pigs will squeal
Afore any one touches 'em, and some men
Are like pigs in that way. Oh, what then?

Well, then he started, cleared out—
Went right off without
Sayin' as much as good-by; and, of course, pooty soon
He wasn't thought of more'n the man in the moon.
That's how it is gen'rally;
Howsomever, you see
He turned up thar agin in about twenty year,
Lookin' not quite like he's now, but still queer;
And all them twenty year he'd been stirrin'
Through parts that was mostly furrin.

It didn't seem like the old place;
Pooty much every face
Was cold and strange; so he left it agin
And come here, bucklin' right down to win
Fust off, he started a school;
But the durned old fool

Had no balance—took to drinkin' once more like mad,
And the school busted. Yes, sir, that was mighty bad
For him. You see, folks didn't care to pay
A man that was boozy and tremblin' all day.

Busted to smash, sir; and then

That unfortunite Ben—

His name's Ben—Ben Blakeley—kept droppin' right down,
Till he's come to be 'bout the miserablest thing in town;

That there doctor of laws,

Which at one time he was,

Ain't now wuth a bushel of shucks, and the whole thing come
From his lettin' hisself slide down from sherry to rum.

If he'd stuck to sherry, things might a' stood all right;

But he got down to rum, sir, and it's ruined him quite.

DANIEL CONNOLLY.

THE DISEASES OF ROMANCE.

WRITERS of fiction owe much of the interest of their productions to the great variety of ills and bodily infirmities incident to human existence. Were it not for sundry severe and often fatal diseases, how could the *dénouement* of a novel be made so satisfactory to the gentle reader? Unpopular, not to say wicked characters, when their brief sands of periodical life are almost run out, are easily disposed of by sudden death, cut down by disease, or disabled by bodily injury. The harsh and unfeeling father, who bids fair to give no end of trouble to the faithful pair "on elopement bent," dies just in time to allow them to marry at leisure and inherit the property. The dissipated elder brother, whose presence becomes disagreeable, has a timely attack of *delirium tremens*, which carries him off amid the pious reflections and improving moralizings of the sensitive author. The managing mamma, while straining every point to compel her unwilling daughter to wed the wicked but rich lover in preference to his poor but virtuous rival, has an attack of apoplexy very acceptably to the reader, and thereby allows the course of true love to run smooth. The false and fickle fair one, who makes shipwreck of the hero's affections and ruins his earthly prospects, goes out very imprudently in thin shoes, and galloping consumption gallops away with her. The faint-hearted lover, who does not dare to breathe his love for fear of being rejected, has an attack of brain-fever, and in his delirium babbles it all to the object of his affections, who very opportunely sits by his side and receives the involuntary confession with delight. The victim of unrequited affection, who has begun to cough in a distressing way, and to wear a hectic flush, welcomes back her wayward lover, and recovers her health just as she seemed in a fair way to die of tubercle. The gentle reader would have no special reason to complain of the sad havoc of disease and death, provided it were confined to the wicked or undesirable characters; but those of us who have read, with dewy eyes and uncertain voices, of the death of Little Nell, Paul Dombey, or Colonel Newcome, know that the purest, bravest, and fairest, are ruthlessly sacrificed in obedience to the inexorable demands of fiction. When an author has nearly finished his story, and finds a whole book-load of hale, hearty characters left upon his hands, these little thunderstrokes of disease or disaster simplify matters wonderfully, and relieve author and reader of untold anxiety. Still, most of these sudden deaths are unnatural, and rarely occur in real every-day life. Take one example. Many interesting heroes and amiable heroines often charm us with their excellences during their brief life of fiction, only to burst blood-vessels in fits of temporary excitement, and die with deplorable facility. But, in actual life, sudden and immediate death from hæmorrhage from the lungs is exceedingly rare. We must not wonder that these various methods of sudden death are so popular with authors, for they are easily managed and extremely convenient. It is quite difficult to make any great blunder in arranging the details of simple murder, poisoning, apoplexy, or hæmorrhage, because the work is straightforward and generally done in a business-like way. When, however, the novelist attempts any thing more complicated in this line, he is liable to grossly mismanage some of the minutæ and sacrifice scientific

accuracy to stage effect. There are comparatively few who, in the language of the laity, "are able to take a character through" a long fit of sickness, without making a mistake in the symptoms or treatment of the disease.

Miss Mulock would fain have us believe that John Halifax, ill for many days with a low form of fever, who has lost courage and strength so far as to be unable to turn himself in bed, in a half-day's time, through the magic of a short note, signed Ursula March, is able to dress himself, walk about, eat a hearty meal, and make a proposal of matrimony. In a magazine tale, written by a popular writer not long since, the hero suffers from complete paralysis of his locomotive apparatus—resulting, of course, from a railroad accident—for two full years, during which time he falls in love with a tender-hearted maiden, through whose sympathetic aid and kindly assistance his nether limbs resume their allegiance. The story was interesting, and the *dénouement* gratifying, since the hero, when the "sedition of his members" was past, married the girl of his choice who, by the merest accident, happened to be both beautiful and wealthy. But, in point of sober fact, it ought to be stated that, when paraplegia, resulting from an injury to the spinal cord, lasts longer than six months without improvement, the case may be considered hopeless.

In one of the most popular of Cooper's novels, a thorough-bred villain, whose name I have forgotten, sits down upon a door-step of a winter's night to concoct some fresh piece of rascality; and, on attempting to rise, finds himself stricken with sympathetic paralysis, as it is called, owing to the exposure to cold. Much to the gratification of author and reader, he is unable to leave the spot, and, after a proper space for repentance, grows rapidly worse and soon dies. This may be admirable fiction, but very poor pathology; for, sympathetic paralysis never proves fatal, when not complicated with any other disease, but goes on steadily to recovery.

The case of Valentine, in Dumas's *Count de Monte Christo*, is much better managed, and does not violate any established law of medical science.

Many of Charles Dickens's delineations of disease are true to Nature. Nothing could be more truthful than the account of the gradual fading of Paul Dombey, or the child-wife Dora. But his portrayal of insanity is faulty. His lunatics have altogether too much method in their madness, and do not fail to show forth all their manifold eccentricities therein. The perennial Mr. Dick, for instance, never does any thing which savors of mental unsoundness, except fly kites and pen memorials regarding Charles L., and is capable of attending to business, gives wise counsel (all the while charging himself with insanity in a manner contrary to all other crazy people), never gets excited, but leads a most exemplary life with the two exceptions above mentioned. "Mr. F.'s Aunt" is a trifle better, although she goes to the other extreme, and never says or does a sensible thing—which is also contrary to the custom of the generality of lunatics.

On the other hand, Reade, thanks to his medical education, delineates insanity with life-like accuracy. A good example of his skill occurs in "Hard Cash," when Captain Dodd loses his senses from long-continued excitement, exposure, and hardship, but recovers again after two years of wandering—the immediate remedial agent being a blow upon the head, received in falling from the yard-arm of a vessel. Another equally faithful picture of monomania occurs in the same book, when the avaricious Richard Hardy has the insane fancy that he is hopelessly ruined, and endeavors to gain his living by begging, although possessed of great wealth. Such faithful pen-pictures prove him to have been a careful student of insane mental manifestations.

Walter Scott's lunatics are uniformly violent and often dangerous people, and display only this special form of insanity. Their insanity compensates in intensity of action for what it lacks in variety of manifestation.

Thackeray has no lunatics, simply because the interest of his writings depends not so much upon incidents and action, as upon careful delineation of motive and keen dissection of the springs of human action. His characters have frailties enough, and do foolish things enough from unworthy motives, to render any special insanity quite superfluous.

It is interesting to note the partiality of various novelists to certain forms of death. Dickens's good characters die of decline, while his villainous ones meet some sudden and awful death. Thackeray's characters are long-lived, and generally die of old age or paralysis—very rarely by any violent death.

Miss Yonge has a penchant for the diseases of infancy and childhood—measles, scarlet fever, and diphtheria, through which dispensations of Providence her amiable and admirable characters are often "done to their death." The author of "Guy Livingstone" thirsts for blood as much as a cannibal hungers for a missionary, and in his latest production kills three principal characters in as many chapters, and disfigures for life the beautiful face of a fourth. Wilkie Collins is equally sanguinary in his tastes, and murders, poisons, drowns, and hangs his characters without remorse. Dumas disposes of his creations by wholesale massacre, although, to his credit be it said, he sometimes restores them to life again. Miss Mulock's characters generally go off quietly and decorously, dying in their beds, with their sorrowing friends about them. John Halifax, it is true, died suddenly; but, as the coroners' verdicts say, from "natural causes." "The author of St. Elmo," *horresco referens*, dispenses to her characters broken blood-vessels, paralysis, inflammation of the brain, malignant typhus, hip-joint disease, heart-disease, and suicide, in the main with an impartial hand, although sometimes a very sturdy, robust character survives successive attacks of the respective maladies, and requires a combination of them to take him out of the world.

It is worthy of note, however, that the popular taste, which formerly delighted in horrors, is changing, and that novels which give pictures of society, or delineations of character, are more sought after. Let us hope that, when the "coming man" writes his corresponding work of fiction, he will use these blood-and-thunder adjuncts with a sparing hand, furnishing only so much as may be needed for the proper action of the story. For his great aim should be to amuse and profit by presenting us ideal scenes, incidents, and characters drawn from Nature, yet excelling her, remembering constantly that fiction is not tragedy.

HENRY M. HURD.

WALLACE ON NATURAL SELECTION.*

THE question whether man has indeed descended from the monkey, or rather whether men and monkeys have not a common ancestry, is the one really involved in the various discussions taking place nowadays about evolution, natural selection, the survival of the fittest, and the origin of species. Hence the interest with which every thinking man regards the speculations of Darwin, Huxley, and—last, not least—that modest but able writer, Alfred Russell Wallace.

In the present work, by the author just named, the question of creation by laws is treated with a simplicity, a clearness, and a reverence of tone, which make it, on the whole, the most interesting book to the general reader which has yet appeared on the subject. The first essay, "On the law which has regulated the introduction of new species," is the celebrated one which appeared originally, in 1855, in *The Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, anticipating by four years the publication of Darwin's still more famous "Origin of Species." The object of this suggestive paper, the importance of which was not generally recognized until attention was drawn to it by the discussions arising out of Darwin's book, is to show that every species of plants and animals has come into existence coincident both in time and space with a *preëxisting, closely-allied species*. By this law, the author thinks, the natural system of arrangement of organic beings, their geographical distribution, their geological sequence, the phenomena of represented and substituted groups, and the most singular peculiarities of anatomical structure, are all explained. The enunciation of this splendid generalization came before the scientific world at a time when thinkers were beginning to grasp the still more general law of CONTINUITY which governs the universe, and which holds good alike in astronomy and in literature, in the history of our planet and in that of the United States, in the development of humanity, and in the unfolding of the mind of Newton. The scientific discoveries made in the nineteenth century had given glimpses of a law as universal in time as that of gravitation in space—the law of continuous progress. Then came Wallace and Darwin, who took up one department of science, and showed that continuity and gradual change characterize the history of living beings, even as Lyell had shown that they do the history of the earth's strata.

These authors assume, what no naturalist will dispute, that, in addition to the obvious law governing the succession of living beings, viz., that "like begets like," there is also a tendency on the part of offspring to wander in a slight degree from the type of the parents, thus producing what naturalists style varieties; and they argue that, in the struggle for existence, useful variations will tend to increase, useless or hurtful variations to diminish; hence that superior varieties will ultimately extirpate the original species. This theory has been tested in various ways during the past fifteen years, and has been found to be a key which fits so many locks that it has grown in favor with naturalists; and although some, like Agassiz and Dawson, are understood to reject it, a large majority of the most eminent living men of science are Darwinians. Natural Selection does not, indeed, explain all the mysteries of life, but it accounts for many of the phenomena of Nature which have long puzzled naturalists, while new facts, new problems, new difficulties, as they arise, are accepted, solved, or removed, by this theory; and its principles are illustrated by the progress and conclusions of every well-established branch of human knowledge.

This law of the survival of the fittest, Mr. Wallace applies in the work before us to the explanation of mimicry and other protective resemblances among animals, and the chapter in which the facts relating to this subject are brought out is one of the most interesting in the book. Concealment, he remarks, is useful to many animals, and absolutely essential to some. Desert animals, for example, are generally desert-colored. The lion is a typical example of this, and must be almost invisible when crouched upon the sand or among desert rocks and stones. Any deviation from the tint best adapted to conceal a carnivorous animal would render the pursuit of its prey more difficult, would place it at a disadvantage among its fellows, and in time of scarcity would probably cause it to starve to death. It is among insects, however, that mimicry is carried to the greatest extent. In the wonderful genus *Phyllium* (the "walking-leaf"), not only are the wings perfect imitations of leaves in every detail, but the thorax and legs are flat and leaf-like, so that, when the living insect is resting amid the foliage on which it feeds, the closest observation is often unable to distinguish between the animal and the vegetable. Mr. Wallace is of opinion that natural selection will account for all the cases of protective resemblance in Nature. This, however, is not the only philosophical explanation of the variety of color in the animal world, the bright colors, according to Darwin, being due in many cases to "sexual selection," color being universally attractive, and thus leading to its propagation and increase. In this connection the author makes the striking remark that, if the colors which please us also attract the inferior animals, and if the various disguises which deceive us are equally deceptive to them, both their powers of vision and their faculties of perception and emotion must be essentially of the same nature as our own.

Following up the same train of thought, in the chapter on the philosophy of birds'-nests, the author expresses his belief that "birds do not build their nests by instinct; that man does not construct his dwelling by reason; that birds change and improve when affected by the same causes that make men do so; and that mankind neither alter nor improve when they exist under conditions similar to those which are almost universal among birds." The fact that in the United States no new style of architecture has been invented is an illustration of the latter remark, while, on the other hand, a curious example of change of habits among birds has recently occurred in Jamaica. "Previous to 1854, the palm-swift inhabited exclusively the palm-trees in a few districts in the island. A colony then established themselves in two cocoa-nut palms in Spanish Town, and remained there till 1857, when one tree was blown down, and the other stripped of its foliage. Instead of now seeking out other palm-trees, the swifts drove out the swallows that built in the piazza of the House of Assembly, and took possession of it, building their nests on the tops of the end-walls and at the angles formed by the beams and joists, a place which they continue to occupy in considerable numbers. It is remarked that here they form their nests with much less elaboration than when built in the palms, probably from being less exposed." Mr. Wallace concludes, from the consideration of many facts like the foregoing, that the phenomena presented by birds in their mode of building nests, when fairly compared with those exhibited by the great mass of mankind in building their houses, indicate no essential difference in the kind or nature of the mental faculties employed.

* Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection. By Alfred Russell Wallace. New York: Macmillan & Co. 12mo, 384 pp.

This view of the identity of mental operations in men and brutes agrees with the theory of the origin of man adopted by the modern school of naturalists—a theory which the author indicates in the following passage: "Man may have been, indeed I believe must have been, once a homogeneous race; but it was at a period of which we have as yet discovered no remains, at a period so remote in his history that he had not yet acquired that wonderfully-developed brain, the organ of the mind, which now, even in his lowest examples, raises him far above the highest brutes; at a period when he had the form but hardly the nature of man, when he neither possessed human speech nor those sympathetic and moral feelings which in a greater or less degree everywhere now distinguish the race. Just in proportion as these truly human faculties became developed in him, would his physical features become fixed and permanent, because the latter would be of less importance to his well-being; he would be kept in harmony with the slowly-changing universe around him by an advance in mind rather than by a change in body. If, therefore, we are of opinion that he was not really man till these higher faculties were fully developed, we may fairly assert that there were many originally distinct races of men; while, if we think that a being closely resembling us in form and structure, but with mental faculties scarcely raised above the brute, must still be considered to have been human, we are fully entitled to maintain the common origin of all mankind." As to the antiquity of man, the author sees no reason why the remains of man or his works may not yet be found in the tertiary deposits.

The ideas, of which we have endeavored above to present a condensation, are startling enough to those who have not kept pace with the recent progress of science, and it cannot be denied that they give pain to many excellent people who consider them antagonistic to religion. Nevertheless it is clear that they involve more elevated conceptions of the wisdom and providence of the Creator than the doctrine that the world was made in six literal days.

There is no reason to anticipate that the establishment of the theory of the immense antiquity of man and his development by natural selection, or by any other process out of inferior types—should it be established—shall be any more injurious to the interests of religion than was the demonstration that the earth moves round the sun instead of the sun moving round the earth. It is a mistake to suppose that the law of the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest is atheistical in its tendency; on the contrary, the establishment of such a law indicates the action and purposes of a higher power. The very fact of a law presupposes a lawgiver, and the fact of evolution indicates the far-seeing action of intelligence. The progress which science shows to have taken place in the organic as in the inorganic world has not been achieved by chance, but by the unceasing action of a superintending Providence. He in whom we ourselves live, and move, and have our being, has directed the movement in accordance with His own wise plans, and toward a definite end. Such, it is gratifying to find, is the view of Mr. Wallace himself, who, in his final chapter on the limits of natural selection as applied to man, points out the insufficiency of his own theory to account for the development of man. He shows, for example—

"that the brain of the lowest savages, and, as far as we yet know, of the prehistoric races, is little inferior in size to that of the highest types of man, and immensely superior to that of the higher animals; while it is universally admitted that quantity of brain is one of the most important, and probably the most essential, of the elements which determine mental power. Yet the mental requirements of savages, and the faculties actually exercised by them, are very little above those of the animals. The higher feelings of pure morality and refined emotion, and the power of abstract reasoning and ideal conception, are useless to them, are rarely if ever manifested, and have no important relations to their habits, wants, desires, or well-being. They possess a mental organ beyond their needs. Natural selection could only have endowed savage man with a brain a little superior to that of an ape, whereas he actually possesses one very little inferior to that of a philosopher. The soft, naked, sensitive skin of man, entirely free from that hairy covering which is so universal among other mammalia, cannot be explained on the theory of natural selection. The habits of savages show that they feel the want of this covering, which is most completely absent in man exactly where it is thickest in other animals. We have no reason whatever to believe that it could have been hurtful or even useless to primitive man, and, under these circumstances, its complete abolition, shown by its most reverting in mixed breeds, is a demonstration of the agency of some other power than the law of the survival of the fittest in the development of man from the lower animals.

"Other characters show difficulties of a similar kind, though not perhaps in an equal degree. The structure of the human foot and hand seem unnecessarily perfect for the needs of savage man, in whom they are as completely and as humanly developed as in the highest races. The structure of the human larynx, giving the power of speech and of producing musical sounds, and especially its extreme development in the female sex, are shown to be beyond the needs of savages, and, from their known habits, impossible to have been acquired either by sexual selection or by the survival of the fittest.

"The mind of man offers arguments in the same direction hardly less strong than those derived from his bodily structure. A number of his mental faculties have no relation to his fellow-men, or to his material progress. The power of conceiving eternity and infinity, and all those purely abstract notions of form, number, and harmony, which play so large a part in the life of civilized races, are entirely outside of the world of thought of the savage, and have no influence on his individual existence or on that of his tribe. They could not, therefore, have been developed by any preservation of useful forms of thought; yet we find occasional traces of them amid a low civilization, and at a time when they could have had no practical effect on the success of the individual, the family, or the race; and the development of a moral sense, or conscience, by similar means is equally inconceivable.

"But, on the other hand, we find that every one of these characteristics is necessary for the full development of human nature. The rapid progress of civilization under favorable conditions would not be possible were not the organ of the mind of man prepared in advance, fully developed as regards size, structure, and proportions, and only needing a few generations of use and habit to coordinate its complex functions. The naked and sensitive skin, by necessitating clothing and houses, would lead to the more rapid development of man's inventive and constructive faculties; and, by leading to a more refined feeling of personal modesty, may have influenced, to a considerable extent, his moral nature. The erect form of man, by freeing the hands from all locomotive uses, has been necessary for his intellectual advancement; and the extreme perfection of his hands has alone rendered possible that excellence in all the arts of civilization which raises him so far above the savage, and is perhaps the forerunner of a higher intellectual and moral advancement. The perfection of his vocal organs has first led to the formation of articulate speech, and then to the development of those exquisitely-toned sounds which are only appreciated by the higher races, and which are probably destined for more elevated uses and more refined enjoyment in a higher condition than we have yet attained to. So, those faculties which enable us to transcend time and space, and to realize the wonderful conceptions of mathematics and philosophy, or which give us an intense yearning for abstract truth (all of which were occasionally manifested at such an early period of human history as to be far in advance of any of the few practical applications which have since grown out of them), are evidently essential to the perfect development of man as a spiritual being, but are utterly inconceivable as having been produced through the action of a law which looks only, and can look only, to the immediate material welfare of the individual or the race.

"The inference I would draw from this class of phenomena is that a superior intelligence has guided the development of man in a definite direction and for a special purpose, just as man guides the development of many animal and vegetable forms. The laws of evolution alone would, perhaps, never have produced a grain so well adapted to man's use as wheat and maize; such fruits as the seedless banana and bread-fruit; or such animals as the Guernsey milch-cow or the London dray-horse. Yet these so closely resemble the unaided productions of Nature that we may well imagine a being who had mastered the laws of development of organic forms through past ages, refusing to believe that any new power has been concerned in their production, and scornfully rejecting the theory (as my theory will be rejected by many who agree with me on other points) that in these few cases a controlling intelligence had directed the action of the laws of variation, multiplication, and survival, for his own purposes. We know, however, that this has been done; and we must, therefore, admit the possibility that, if we are not the highest intelligences in the universe, some higher intelligence may have directed the process by which the human race was developed by means of more subtle agencies than we are acquainted with."

This suggestive and closely-reasoned passage, which it was impossible to abridge, will give some idea of the value of the present work as an original contribution to science. Mr. Wallace has succeeded in making a difficult subject attractive by the clearness and precision of his style, and the novelty of his illustrations. Anybody can understand his essays and enjoy them, and therefore the present volume may safely be recommended to those who wish to know something authoritative upon the most important scientific question of the day.

TABLE-TALK.

AT Christmas-time, more, it would seem, than at any other, we have our dreams, our retrospections, and our reveries. At this season we love to get before the generous wood-fire, or the glowing anthracite piled high in the ample grate, and find those pictures in the coals that we are wont to believe, half reveal and half hide themselves in the blaze. And these pictures are sometimes processions of the great, ever-lengthening past; and sometimes they are images that our hopes cast forward upon the future. We are all of us prone to go to the fire for our fancies. When the curtains are drawn, and the twilight is hushed, and the fire is filling the chamber with a soft effulgence, then to sink into an easy-chair before the grate, and let the musings and the meditations take what wayward mood they may, has in it, doubtless, something of luxurious self-indulgence; but the occasion often warms our affections, and awakens our sweetest memories. In such a mood, we were meditating, close within the shadow of the coming Christmas, upon what new, fresh, or pleasant thing we might say of this cherished festivity. Yet, how could we hope to gather of the radiant coals, of the curling flames that flickered on the surface, of the ashes that fell dead at the bottom, any new thought or new suggestion of this greatly-discussed theme? Nothing new, assuredly, of the religious thought, hallowing and ever glorifying the day, and which has been so enforced in verse and essay! Nothing new of the beautiful social amenities of the time, which have found such rare setting-forth by the best genius of our race!—Alas, a shadow on the fire! Where is he who more than any other author has filled the world with ideas of the sweetness, the beauty, and the holy charity of the Christmas season? What pictures now rapidly troop before us in the fire! Do these shadows fitting by know their master is gone? Do they understand that no more kindred shall swell the strange, fantastic, and yet beautiful procession? Ah! Tiny Tim, and Bob Cratchit, and regenerated Scrooge, and Dot, and blind Bertha, and Toby, and Milly, and the Haunted Man, and all you Christmas folk, whose strange and tender Christmas sorrows and Christmas joys have made the world so much better and so much wiser—do you heed that the thought that conceived you is hushed, the hand that fashioned you is still? There is a shadow, indeed, upon the Christmas which first mourns for the loss of the finest genius that ever ministered to human affections. And there is not only this shadow, which, twelve months since, our Christmas fires neither knew nor predicted—there is upon the blaze the reflection of a vast sorrow in those far-off belligerent lands, which only a year ago were blessed with peace and happiness. In one fair country, Christmas, alas! can only be a wall of sorrow; in another, in more homes than we dare to think of, the myrtle must supplant the Christmas holly. "Ring out," said the poet to the New-Year bells, with more of hope than prophetic inspiration—"ring out the thousand wars of old, ring in the thousand years of peace."

Not yet, it would seem. The very anniversary consecrated to Him whose message was peace and good-will to all the earth—how is it honored by the embattled hosts in France? The pictures in the fire show us that in the warlike camp, organized for death and destruction, there are possibly some lame and most inconsistent honors to the Prince of Peace—or, greater mockery still, another picture shows a hundred thousand Christians hurled upon each other for purposes of mutual destruction. Here are churches—so we see in the fire—hung with garlands, while hymn and anthem rise to heaven in rapturous praise of the Great Birth; here are domestic circles—so we further see in the fire—where love and tenderness and sympathy awaken, by the spirit of the occasion, to their highest expression; here—we still read our story in the revealing blaze—are ten thousand voices proclaiming from pulpits, or in song and story, the beautiful significance of the day; and yet here, even as we look, these pictures of human fellowship are hidden in battle-clouds, are obliterated in visions of conflict, passion, and death. We learn, then, nothing in the fire but the instability and the inconsistency of all things. The visions that came before us have, doubtless, their many lessons; but the principal one that now asserts itself is that Christmas sentiments of peace and good-will need deeper scoring in our hearts than so far either story, or poem, or hymn, or Church, or sermon, or domestic festivity, has accomplished. When, after eighteen hundred Christmases, the "thousand years of peace" are no nearer than at the beginning, it is time we should inquire what fatal defect in our Christian education can render this statement a truth. But the pictures in the fire are not all sad. There is peace in our own land. There have been health, fruition, and prosperity, for most of us; and even for such sorrows that we have known the images in the fire have consolation. What shall we see in the coals when, as another Christmas comes round, we drop into a reverie before its animating blaze? What deaths and calamities shall we mourn? What new disappointments shall cast their shadows upon the coals? What peace shall we celebrate? What new hopes shall give brilliancy and glory to the pictures in the blaze?

NEW-YORK CITY, November 26, 1870.

To the Editor of Appletons' Journal.

SIR: In your issue for December 3d, under the head of "Miscellany," it is stated that "Baron Münchhausen" was long believed to be only a *nom de plume*, and a parody on the "Travels of Baron de Tott," or on Bruce's "Travels in Abyssinia," but that in "the Gentleman's Magazine" for January, 1857, it is satisfactorily made out that "Münchhausen's Travels" were written at Dalcoath Mine, in Cornwall, England, by Mr. Raspe, a German, who was storekeeper of that establishment." The true history of Baron Münchhausen, however, is as follows: Münchhausen was one of the Brunswickers who served under General Riedesel against us in the Revolutionary War. At the time of Burgoyne's surrender, Münchhausen lost a leg while defending "the great redoubt" against the spirited attack of General Arnold. After the war, he returned to his native city, Brunswick, and lived there until his death, which occurred about the year

1804. Being incapacitated for any active employment, Münchhausen amused himself by writing those marvellous stories for children, which have, in Germany at least, become classic. I have myself stood over his grave in Brunswick, in company with Registrar Sack (of the Brunswick Civil Court), who was personally acquainted with Münchhausen, and who is also my authority for the statement that the Münchhausen who was wounded in the redoubt is identical with the author of the "Adventures."

WILLIAM L. STONE.

We presume that our correspondent is correct in saying that a Münchhausen of Brunswick served in Burgoyne's army, and lost a leg at Saratoga. But it does not follow that he was the author or the hero of the famous story-book. On the contrary, we believe that the real Münchhausen was a Hanoverian baron, named Hieronymus Karl Friedrich von Münchhausen, who was born in 1720 on his paternal estate of Bodenwerder, and died there in 1797. In his youth he served in the Russian army, and took part in the campaign of 1737-39 against the Turks. But we doubt if he ever served in America, except in imagination. The Münchhausen of Burgoyne's army must have been another person, if he lived to 1804, and was buried in Brunswick. The Münchhausen family is a numerous one in Germany, and of great antiquity. A Baron Münchhausen was prime-minister of Hanover in 1765. Our correspondent says that the Brunswick Münchhausen, after his return from America, "amused himself by writing those marvellous stories." We believe it is well established that the "Adventures of Baron Münchhausen" were first published, not in German, but in English, in London, in 1785. Their author, or compiler, was Rudolph Erich Raspe, a German man of letters, who had long lived in England. The work was translated into German, in 1786, by the poet Bürger, who in his preface acknowledges that it was first written and printed in England, but claims for the tales a German origin.

—Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, addressing an audience in Boston on the subject of war, said: "Women have been held as non-voters because they are non-combatants. I come now to advance a very different doctrine. The votes of the bloody hands have been counted for centuries. It is now time to count the votes of the bleeding hearts. You say that women should not vote because they cannot fight; and I say that women should vote because they cannot fight, because God has attuned their natures to peace and harmonious action, because He has given them a tender care for human life, which the rougher man easily forgets." This pretty piece of rhetoric assumes every thing and misstates every thing. When has there been a time in the history of the world that women have not been as urgent for war as men? Have they not, in fact, often been the inciting cause? The Roman matron buckled the sword to the side of her young son; the maiden of later times sent her lover to battle in her behalf with her ribbon tied to his sleeve; "God and the ladies!" was the cry of chivalry; in the French Revolution there were no fiercer democrats than the *citoyennes*; and, in our own recent

struggle, there were no voices so clamorous for war, both North and South, as those of women. The fact is, that non-combatants of all kinds—kings, ministers, senators, priests, and women—have ever been more reckless of war than combatants. Your professional soldier may hail the approach of conflict with pleasure, but, if the existence of war were left to the decision of those combatants who are drawn from the peaceful pursuits of life, battle and slaughter would cease. The women can doubtless, under right direction, do much toward promoting the ends of peace; but, when they talk of "God attuning their natures," as distinct from man, "to peace and harmonious action," they utter preposterous nonsense, and show their utter inability to comprehend the subject with which they would grapple. Let the peace-women drop their transcendental rhetoric, and aim to measure the facts of the subject they would advocate and discuss, if they would obtain a respectful hearing.

—The Hon. Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, writes as follows about "Valerie Aylmer," the new novel of Southern life recently published by D. Appleton & Co., New York:

"LIBERTY HALL, CRAWFORDSVILLE, GEORGIA, }
November 28, 1870. }

"Mr. J. C. Derby, Augusta, Georgia:

"MY DEAR SIR—I am well pleased with 'Valerie.' I was not able to read it myself, owing to the condition of my eyes; but I have had it read to me, and I assure you I think it a work of rare merit. I became exceedingly interested in it. The descriptive power, the word-painting power of the author, is very great. I do not know when I have met with a novel which has pleased me so much. I shall look with interest to the future career of this writer in the fields of literature. There must be a great deal more of the same sort where this came from. I feel a great deal of curiosity to see how what has interested me so much will be appreciated by the people generally.

"Yours truly,

"ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS."

In a subsequent letter, dated November 30th, Mr. Stephens gives his consent to the publication of the foregoing note, and says of "Valerie Aylmer": "I was exceedingly interested in it, and pleased with it. I consider it one of the best, indeed the very best, novel I have met with in a long time."

—The editor of the *Christian Union*, whose printers, we presume, never make a mistake, favored us lately with the following notice: "APPLETON'S JOURNAL deserves well of our generation, although it does make some rather droll blunders, as when it lately intimated that *Cannabis Indica* (Indian hemp) and opium were one and the same thing. One of its funniest lapses occurred in the issue of December 3d. The editor quotes the *Utica Herald* as saying of the JOURNAL: 'It contains matter of interest to all; and, better than all, it contains no matter of an unexceptionable character,' etc. 'This,' says the JOURNAL, 'is high praise!' Omitting the 'un,' which we italicise in the *Herald's* eulogy, and we are ready to heartily acquiesce in its otherwise equivocal praise." We thank the editor of the *Union* for his good-natured expressions, and are gratified to find that he

reads the JOURNAL so carefully, and also that he has been able to discover only two blunders in the vast variety of matter which we present from week to week. The first of the errors he mentions was made by a contributor, and was corrected in a subsequent number of the JOURNAL. The second was detected and corrected while the form was on the press, and went through only a part of our edition.

—We omit in this number of the JOURNAL our usual "War Notes," and substitute for them some "Christmas Notes," more appropriate to the season than what "pertains to feats of broil and battle." At the date at which we write (December 5th) the war in France is raging with full fury. Let us hope that, by the time these lines reach our readers, the gentle and kindly influences of Christmas will prevail, and that the two great representative nations of Christendom, the first of Catholic and the first of Protestant powers, will cease their savage and unchristian strife.

Literary Notes.

OF Mr. Richard A. Proctor's "Other Worlds than ours," just published, the readers of the JOURNAL have had a foretaste in the article on "The Planet Mars," published in the issue of December 3d. Mr. Proctor's volume is a consideration of the plurality of worlds, studied under the light of recent scientific researches. So rapidly has the science of astronomy progressed that arguments in relation to the subject of life in other worlds, which were hypothetical thirty years ago, have recently either become certainties or been disproved. "Never," says Mr. Proctor, in his introduction, "since men first explored the celestial depths, has a series of more startling discoveries rewarded the labors of astronomers and physicists than during the past few years. Unhoped-for revelations have been made on every side; analogies the most interesting have brought the distant orbs of heaven into close relationship with our own earth, or with the central luminary of the planetary scheme. And a lesson has been taught us which bears even more significantly on our views respecting the existence of other worlds: we have learned to recognize within the solar system, and within the wondrous galaxy of which our sun is a constituent orb, a variety of structure and a complexity of detail of which but a few years ago astronomers had formed but the most inadequate conceptions. My object, then, in the pages which follow, is not solely to establish the thesis that there are other worlds than ours, but to present, in a new and I hope interesting light, the marvellous discoveries which have rewarded recent scientific researches. Judged merely according to their direct significance, these discoveries are well calculated to excite our admiration for the wonderful works of God in His universe, and for the far-reaching scope of the mental powers which He has given to His creature Man. But it is when we consider recent discoveries in their relation to the existence of other worlds, when we attempt to form a conception of the immense varieties of the forms of life corresponding to the innumerable varieties of cosmical structure disclosed by modern researches, that we recognize the full significance of those discoveries." Mr. Proctor's work is as entertaining as a romance, and should be read by all interested in the great science of which it treats.

A novel holiday-book for this season is Paul Konevka's *silhouette* illustrations to Goethe's "Faust." Books with *silhouette* illustrations were first introduced in Mr. Konevka's "Midsummer Night's Dream," issued last year, and this has since been followed by "Puck's Nightly Pranks" and "Evening Amusement." There is more in this character of design than at first sight appears, and, like almost all other specialties in art, require a special study to appreciate them. The illustrations to "Faust" appear in a handsome volume, published by Roberts Brothers, of Boston.

Of all Dickens's minor pieces, the "Child's Dream of a Star" has probably been most read and most admired. Messrs. Fields, Osgood & Co. have published, as a holiday-volume, an illustrated edition of this little prose-poem, the drawings from the pencil of Mr. Hammet Billings. The admirers of this most purely poetical and imaginative of Dickens's brief sketches will be glad to welcome it in this handsome volume.

"Every Day," by the author of "Katherine Morris," is a pleasant domestic tale, affording a few good delineations of character, and animated by a highly moral and Christian spirit. The incidents are simple, the life familiar, and the style good. The volume is handsomely printed, and is published by Noyes, Holmes & Co., of Boston.

"The Poison of Asps," by Florence Marryat, which appeared in the columns of the JOURNAL, has been published in book-form.

Christmas Notes.

Christmas.

CENTURIES ago there came unto the watchful shepherds of Judea a vision such as never before nor since gladdened mortal eyes. Night, peaceful and holy, had cast its veil over hill and plain; stars looked out from their far, glorious homes; the sounds of busy life were stilled—and those lowly men were alone with Nature and God.

Suddenly a light, neither of sun nor moon, broke upon their dazzled senses, and radiant faces beamed upon them, and exultant voices sang the new hymn of "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good-will to man." Thus was announced by celestial messengers the grandest event in the world's history. Not unto palaces and gorgeous temples did they carry the glad tidings, but unto the poor and lowly; and He, the Saviour, Prophet, King, who "was born this day," lay in His helplessness cradled in a manger.

In contemplating the circumstances of His birth, rank, pride, and riches, dwindle and are lost as foam upon an ocean-wave. The Son of God, Saviour of the world, Redeemer of Israel, was sent in His infancy, not to the Roman governor or the Jewish high-priest, but to Joseph and Mary, to be reared in their humble home, to labor with and for them till His higher calling was ready and he must be about His Master's work.

That glorious mission was accomplished; and now, through a line of centuries, His influence has been widening, His spirits permeating other spirits more and more, and to-day, with deep and holy emotion, we celebrate His birth, and renew our vows of love and allegiance.

Welcome the day with rejoicings, with evergreens typical of His unfading memory, with kindly wishes and simple gifts of remembrance, for His advent brought that which

gives new significance and value to life, and revealed immortality, without which life were a mockery.

The cheerless stable, the manger-cradle, Joseph and Mary watching the new-found treasure, the wise men with their gifts, the wondering, curious crowd—how vividly the mind can picture all; but it is the babe itself around which our sympathies cluster, for in Him we see all that He was to become to us, friend, guide, comforter, revealing the Father to His children.

Christmas Flowers

BY ADELIAE A. FLETCHER.

The earth is so bleak and deserted,
So cold the winds blow,
That no bud or blossom will venture
To peep from below;
But, longing for spring-time, they nestle
Deep under the snow.

Oh, in May how we honored Our Lady,
Her own month of flowers!
How happy we were with our garlands
Through all the spring hours!
All her shrines, in the church or the way-side,
Were made into bowers.

And in August—her glorious Assumption;
What feast was so bright!
What clusters of virginal lilies,
So pure and so white!
Why, the incense could scarce overpower
Their perfume that night.

And through her dear feasts of October
The roses bloomed still;
Our baskets were laden with flowers,
Her vases to fill:
Oleanders, geraniums, and myrtles,
We chose at our will.

And we know when the Purification,
Her first feast, comes round,
The early spring flowers, to greet it,
Just opening are found;
And pure, white, and spotless, the snow-drop
Will pierce the dark ground.

And now, in this dreary December,
Our glad hearts are fain
To see if earth comes not to help us;
We seek all in vain:
Not the tiniest blossom is coming
Till Spring breathes again.

And the bright feast of Christmas is dawning,
And Mary is blest;
For now she will give us her Jesus,
Our dearest, our best,
And see where she stands, the maid-mother,
Her babe on her breast!

And not one poor garland to give her,
And yet now, behold,
How the kings bring their gifts—myrrh and
incense,
And bars of pure gold;
And the shepherds have brought for the Baby
Some lambs from their fold.

He stretches His tiny hands toward us,
He brings us all grace;
And look at His mother who holds Him—
The smile on her face
Says they welcome the humblest gifts
In the manger we place,

Where love takes, let love give; and so doubt
not:

Love counts but the will,
And the heart has its flowers of devotion
No Winter can chill;
They who cared for "good-will" that first
Christmas
Will care for it still.

In the chaplet on Jesus and Mary,
From our hearts let us call,
At each Ave-Maria we whisper
A rose-bud shall fall,
And at each Gloria Patri a lily,
The crown of them all!

A Christmas-tree.

I have been looking on, this evening, at a merry company of children assembled round that pretty German toy, a Christmas-tree. The tree was planted in the middle of a great, round table, and towered high above their heads. It was brilliantly lighted by a multitude of little tapers; and everywhere sparkled and glittered with bright objects. There were rosy-cheeked dolls, hiding behind the green leaves; there were real watches (with movable hands, at least, and an endless capacity of being wound up) dangling from innumerable twigs; there were French-polished tables, chairs, bedsteads, wardrobes, and eight-day clocks, and various other articles of domestic furniture (wonderfully made in tin at Wolverhampton), perched among the boughs, as if in preparation for some fairy housekeeping; there were jolly, broad-faced little men, much more agreeable in appearance than many real men—and no wonder, for their heads took off, and showed them to be full of sugar-plums; there were fiddles and drums; there were tambourines, books, work-boxes, paint-boxes, sweetmeat-boxes, peep-show boxes, all kinds of boxes; there were trinkets for the elder girls, far brighter than any grown-up gold and jewels; there were baskets and pincushions in all devices; there were guns, swords, and banners; there were witches standing in enchanted rings of pasteboard, to tell fortunes; there were teetotums, humming-tops, needle-cases, pen-wipers, smelling-bottles, conversation-cards, bouquet-holders; real fruit, made artificially dazzling with gold-leaf; imitation apples, pears, and walnuts, crammed with surprises; in short, as a pretty child before me delightfully whispered to another pretty child, her bosom friend, "There was every thing and more." This motley collection of odd objects, clustering on the tree like magic fruit, and flashing back the bright looks directed toward it from every side—some of the diamond-eyes admiring it were hardly on a level with the table, and a few were languishing in timid wonder on the bosoms of pretty mothers, aunts, and nurses—made a lively realization of the fancies of childhood; and set me thinking how all the trees that grow, and all the things that come into existence on the earth, have their wild adornments at that well-remembered time.—*Charles Dickens.*

A Perfect Christmas.

A Christmas day, to be perfect, should be clear and cold, with holly-branches in berry, a blazing fire, a dinner with mince-pies, and games and forfeits in the evening. You cannot have it in perfection if you are very fine and fashionable. Neither, alas! can it be enjoyed by the very poor; so that, in fact, a perfect Christmas is impossible to be had till the progress of things has distributed comfort more equally. But, when we do our best, we are privileged to enjoy our utmost; and charity gives us a right to hope. The completest enjoyer of Christmas (next to a lover who has to receive forfeits from his mistress), is the holiday school-boy who springs up early, like a bird, darting hither and thither, out of sheer delight, thinks of his mince-pies half the morning, has too much of them when they come (pardon him this once), roasts chestnuts and cuts apples half the evening, is conscious of his new silver in his pocket, and laughs at

every piece of mirth with a loudness that rises above every other noise. Next day what a peg-top will he not buy! what string, what nuts, what gingerbread! And he will have a new clasp-knife, and pay three times too much for it. Sour oranges also will he suck, squeezing their cheeks into his own with staring eyes; and his mother will tell him they are not good for him—and let him go on.

A Christmas evening should, if possible, finish with music. It carries off the excitement without abruptness, and sheds a repose over the conclusion of enjoyment.

A word respecting the more serious part of the day's subject alluded to above. It is but a word, but it may sow a seed of reflection in some of the best natures, especially in these days of perplexity between new doctrines and old. It appears to us that there is a point never enough dwelt upon, if at all, by those who attempt to bring about a reconciliation between belief and the want of it. It is addressed only to the believers in a Providence, but those who have that belief, if they have no other, are a numerous body. The point is this—that Christianity, to say the least of it, is a *great event*. It has had a wonderful effect on the world, and still has, even in the workings of its apparently-unfailing daughter, modern Philosophy, who could never have been what she is but for the doctrine of boundless sympathy, grafted upon the elegant self-reference of the Greeks, and the patriotism of the Romans, which was so often a mere pretext for the most unneighborly injustice. Now, so great an event must have been in the contemplation of Providence—one of the mountain-tops of its manifestation; and if we say, even of a Shakespeare and a Plato (and not without reason), that there is something "divine" in them, that is to say, something partaking of a more energetic and visible portion of the mysterious spirit breathed into mankind, how much more, and with how much more reverential a love, ought we not to have a divine impression of the nature of Him who drew the great line between the narrowness of the Old World and the universalities of the New, and uttered to the earth, through the angelical organ of His whole being, life, and death, that truly celestial doctrine, "Think of others!"—*Leigh Hunt.*

Christmas Ceremonies.

If some part of the English Christmas ceremonies was derived from Saturnalia, another was evidently of northern origin. In the evening the yule-log, a Christmas-stock, was burnt in the principal apartment, the company gathered round the fire, and the cheerful cup was passed round. What remains to modern times of Christmas-gambols then commenced; and ancient Christian plays are still to be traced among them. Blind-man's-buff, hunt-the-slipper, the game of the goose, snap-dragon, push-pin, robins-alive, etc., etc., together with forfeits, dancing, etc., form the amusements of the younger part of the assemblage. In some portions of England the yule-log will crackle on the blazing hearth, while the foaming tankards pass merrily round. In our land, also, appropriate festivities will not be wanting; and in many a household this night blind-man's-buff and other festive games will speed the evening—while the grandsire, seated in his great arm-chair, with his grown-up sons and daughters around him, will gaze with delight upon the sparkling eyes and merry faces of the younger groups—until the amusements of the young, and the colloquies of the old are brought to a close by the clock, with its iron tongue and brazen voice proclaiming the hour of retiring. We are not aware, however, that any thing is

known among our country-people of the yule-log or yule-song; but we can look back with pleasure upon many a Christmas festive scene, when the largest log and the best maple and hickory were selected for the Christmas-fire, which, when the evening came,

"Went roaring up the chimney wide,"

while the lads and lasses went tripping about with joyous faces, and the tale, the dance, and the game, the mince-pie and the spice-bowl, rendered doubly sweet by the approving smiles of delighted parents, completed the general satisfaction.

Christmas in Yorkshire.

In no part of England is Christmas so splendidly celebrated as in Yorkshire. The work of preparation commences for some weeks before, and its sports and festivities continue during the first month of the new year. The poor of the parish visit all the neighboring farmers to beg corn, which is invariably given them, to the measure of a pint each. Poor old women, called vessel-cup singers, go about from house to house, with a waxen or wooden doll, fantastically dressed, and sometimes adorned with an orange or rosy-tinged apple. With this in their hands, they chant a carol, invoking blessings upon the masters, mistresses, and little children of the houses where they call. At eight o'clock, on Christmas-eve, the bells greet "Old Father Christmas" with a merry peal, the children parade the streets with drums, trumpets, bells, kettles, warming-pans, and shovels, taken from their respective cottages. The yule-candle is now lighted. Supper is then served, of which one dish is invariably frumenty, from the mansion to the cottage. Yule-cake, one of which is always made for each individual in the family, and other more substantial viands, are likewise added. The Christmas-pie is still a regular dish, and generally consists of a goose, sometimes two, with the addition of half a dozen other fowls.

Christmas-Day.

Blest day, which aye reminds us, year by year,
What 'tis to be a man; to curb and spurn
The tyrant in us; that ignobler self
Which boasts, not loathes, its likeness to the brute,

And owns no good save ease, no ill save pain,
No purpose, save its share in that wild war
In which, through countless ages, living things
Compete in interecine greed. Ah, God!
Are we as creeping things, which have no Lord?

That we are brutes, great God, we know too well;
Apes daintier-featured; silly birds, who flaunt
Their plumes, unheeding of the fowler's step;
Spiders, who catch with paper, not with webs;
Tigers, who slay with cannon and sharp steel,
Instead of teeth and claws; all these we are.
Are we no more than these, save in degree?
No more than these; and born but to compete—

To envy and devour, like beast or herb;
Mere fools of Nature; puppets of strong lusts,
Taking the sword, to perish with the sword
Upon the universal battle-field,
Even as the things upon the moor outside?
The heath eats up green grass and delicate flowers,

The pine eats up the heath, the grub the pine,
The finch the grub, the hawk the silly finch;
And man, the mightiest of all beasts of prey,
Eats what he lists; the strong eat up the weak,

The many eat the few; great nations, small;
And he who cometh in the name of all
Shall, greediest, triumph by the greed of all;
And, armed by his own victims, eat up all;

While ever out of the eternal heavens
Looks patient down the great magnanimous God,

Who, Maker of all worlds, did sacrifice
All to Himself. Nay, but Himself to one;
Who taught mankind on that first Christmas-day,

What 'twas to be a man; to give, not take;
To serve, not rule; to nourish, not devour;
To help, not crush; if need, to die, not live.
O blessed day! which gives the eternal lie
To self, and sense, and all the brute within;
Oh, come to us, amid this war of life;
To hall and hovel, come; to all who toil
In senate, shop, or study; and to those
Who, sundered by the wastes of half a world,
Ill-warned, and sorely tempted, ever face
Nature's brute powers and men unmanned to brutes.

Come to them, blest and blessing, Christmas-day.

Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem;
The kneeling shepherds, and the Babe Divine;
And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas-day!

Christmas Fifty Years ago.

In *Niles's Register* of January 17, 1818, we find the following: "The different manner in which the anniversary of the Nativity is observed in different parts of the United States is worthy of remark. In Boston it seems to have been partially observed on the 25th ult., by a recommendation in the public papers to abstain from business, and by some concerts of sacred music in the evening. In New York some of the stores were shut up; but the theatre was open in the evening, and Mr. Cooper played George Barnwell. In Philadelphia about one-half of the people paid some attention to the day; but in Baltimore, and to the southward of it, the stores were shut up, the banks closed, and business suspended as on a Sunday. The churches also were for the most part opened in the morning, and the afternoon was given to refreshment and mirth, being an almost universal holiday. The only daily papers published in the United States, northward of New York, are two at Boston, and they only, I believe, were published on that day."

Birth of Christ.

Hail, all hail the joyful morn!
Tell it forth from earth to heaven,
That to us a child is born,
That to us a son is given.

Angels, bending from the sky,
Chanted at the wondrous birth:
"Glory be to God on high,
Peace—good-will to man on earth."

Join we then our feeble lays
To the chorus of the sky;
And, in songs of grateful praise,
Glory give to God on high.

The Origin of Christmas-gifts.

Christmas-gifts had their origin in the Roman Paganalia, which was instituted by Servius Tullius, B. C. 550. On these festivals, celebrated at the beginning of the year, an altar was erected in every village, and to the box placed upon it every man, woman, and child, was expected to contribute a coin. Aubrey speaks of a pot in which Roman coins were found, and supposed to be one of these Paganalian vessels. The Christmas-box naturally arose from this pagan New-Year's-box. There is an impressive propriety and tender beauty, however, in thus commemorating the event which gave a Divine Redeemer to a lost world—the greatest gift that is conceivable to

mankind. It is, moreover, an equally-appropriate custom which makes the season one, not only of composing and forgetting old quarrels, and renewing and confirming friendships, but for a universal manifestation of generosity and charity from the rich to the poor—in olden times this beneficence being extended even to the lower animals, a practice to which Burns alludes in "The Auld Farmer's Address to his Mare."

"A Merry Christmas!"

(See illustration on first page.)

Early in the rosy morning
On my way I go,
Freighted with my happy heart,
And crunching through the snow;
Bearing, too, a precious burden
Heaped with hearty cheer,
To wish a merry Christmas
And a happy New-Year!

Here's a plump and heavy gobbler!
Mark his fallen crest!
Bottles from their port-holes peeping—
All to guard the rest!
Wonder if the parson's dozing?
Won't he think it queer?
Hurrah for merry Christmas!
And a happy New-Year!

Snow! snow! velvet snow,
Everywhere you see;
Earth is like a frosted pound-cake,
So it seems to me!
Hark! the village-bells are chiming,
Singing loud and clear—
"A merry, merry Christmas,
And a happy New-Year!"

Why, the very winds are jolly,
Piping in delight;
Seems to be a new earth sent us
While we slept at night!
For, the trees, so black and leafless,
Don't look half so drear,
And nod a merry Christmas,
And a happy New-Year!

"Peace on earth, good-will to men!"
That was the text I heard;
So I tender my "good-will"
As cheery as a bird!
And let me say, before I knock,
To everybody here:
"A merry, merry Christmas,
And a happy New-Year!"

GEORGE COOPER.

The Christmas-tree, on Christmas-eve, in Germany and the north of Europe, as also very extensively in America, is a splendor and delight in the eyes and imaginations of all the children, and, in fact, forms the grandest feature in the festal season of Christmas among the northern European nations, being often called the Children's Festival. The Christmas-tree seems to be a very ancient custom in Germany—a remnant, probably, of the splendid and fanciful pageants of the middle ages. The custom was early introduced into this country by the German immigrants, but was hardly known to England till within the present century. The first forming of the Christmas-tree in England is believed to have been done by a German in the household of Queen Caroline, wife of George IV., who saw few happy Christmas-trees after her marriage in 1795. The custom did not become general there till Prince Albert came over from Germany to be the husband of Queen Victoria, and since then it has become almost universal in that country.

Of all times in the year, the Christmas-tide is that at which hearts and purse-strings should

open widest in thoughts and deeds of charity. Those should give who never gave before, and those who are charitable always, should at this season give the more. Some of our overflow of happiness should not fail to reach the poor and miserable, whom Santa Claus, an aristocratic fellow, is otherwise apt to slight. "To give is more blessed than to receive," especially when with so little so much happiness may be brought about. The most of those best able to give, who are apt to be personally unacquainted with the misery of our great city and the proper ways for its relief, will do well to distribute their bounty through the regularly-organized channels, which reach all classes.

The beautiful custom of adorning the houses with evergreen during the Christmas holidays, is ascribed to various causes. Those who have taken the Christian view of the matter refer to those expressions, so frequently met with in the prophetic writings, where green boughs are spoken of as ornaments of the sanctuary and signs of rejoicing. Others have affirmed that the custom had a pagan origin, and refer to the beautiful druidical custom of hanging up in the house boughs of green, to which the wood-spirits might resort to shelter them from the nipping blasts of winter.

Even in rude times, Christmas has had the power to mitigate the ferocities of war. During the siege of Orleans, in 1438, the English historian says, the solemnities and festivities of Christmas gave a short interval of repose. The English lords requested of the French commanders that they might have a night of minstrelsy with trumpets and clarions. This was granted, and the horrors of war were suspended by melodies which were thought to be delightful.

Let Christmas be consecrated to the communion of religious worship and to social festivity; to worship solemn, not gloomy—but of hearts full of gratitude and love; to social festivity—cheerful as becoming the day; let friends be remembered, and the poor feel that they are included in our sympathies. In every heart let there be peace and love; and overall, the bright blue heaven of hope, radiant with the golden sunshine of happiness.

The Christian nations of the world honor the anniversary of the Saviour's birth with solemn worship and with social joy; with the impressive pomp of religious ceremonials; with poetry, music, eloquence, and spiritual communion. In this beautiful festival—the grandest and the gladdest festival of the sons of men—they celebrate the spiritual regeneration of mankind.

There is a very curious custom observed by the Greek Church throughout Russia. It is the baptism at Christmas of the patron-saint. Each village and each city has its particular patron. In the larger towns, the ceremony is performed by a bishop. A cross is cut in the ice, and the patron-saint, represented by a carved wooden effigy, is baptized.

The beautiful spirit of beneficence has endeared Christmas-day to the poor and the young. What a joyous time it brings to the heart of childhood! And how pleasant it must be to a truly generous nature to participate in the usual felicities of the holiday-season, and to observe the exultation of the young at the tokens of affection they receive!

Christmas should be consecrated to high and holy uses, and the day made subservient not only to present enjoyment but to happy reflections in the future. The memory of such a season should always sparkle and brighten

with the joyous, the generous, the beneficent and the good—so that it will be, indeed, a "Merry Christmas."

Christmas is each year more generally observed in New England, where it was once proscribed by law, and before another generation it is probable most of the religious denominations here will observe the anniversary by public religious services.

Christmas-day has now been consecrated for so many centuries, and its observance is so closely associated with the religious ideas of the great mass of the Christian world, that the discussion of the historical accuracy of the date has ceased to be important.

The Saviour had not where to lay His head, but His Scriptures are translated into a thousand languages, and the grandest structures of the modern world are the home of His Church, and the temples of His worship.

The first tragedy in the language, and one of the oldest comedies, were both first brought out as a part of the Christmas-festivities of the period.

The first song ever composed in England was a Christmas-carol in Anglo-Norman French.

Miscellany.

The Origin of Mosquitoes.

THE Red-River Indians have a curious legend respecting the origin of mosquitoes. They say that once upon a time there was a famine, and the Indians could get no game. Hundreds had died from hunger, and desolation filled the whole country. All kinds of offerings were made to the Great Spirit without avail, till one day two hunters came upon a white wolverene, a very rare animal. Upon shooting the white wolverene, an old woman sprang out of the skin, and, saying that she was Manitou, promised to go and live with the Indians, promising them plenty of game as long as they treated her well, and gave her the first choice of all the game that should be brought in. The two Indians assented to this, and took the old woman with them, which event was immediately succeeded by an abundance of game. When the sharpness of the famine had passed in the prosperity which the old woman had brought to the tribe, the Indians became dainty in their appetites, and complained of the manner in which the old woman took to herself all the choice bits; and this feeling became so intense that, notwithstanding her warning that if they violated their promise a terrible calamity would come upon the Indians, they one day killed her as she was seizing her share of a fat reindeer which the hunters had brought in. Great consternation immediately struck the witnesses of the deed, and the Indians, to escape the predicted calamity, boldly struck their tents and moved away to a great distance. Time passed on without any catastrophe occurring, and, game becoming more plentiful, the Indians again began to laugh at their being deceived by the old woman. Finally a hunting-party on a long chase of a reindeer, which had led them back to the spot where the old woman was killed, came upon her skeleton, and one of them in derision kicked the skull with his foot. In an instant a small, spiral, vapor-like body arose from the eyes and ears of the skull, which proved to be insects, that attacked the hunters with great fury, and drove them to the river for protection. The skull continued

to pour out its little stream, and the air became full of avengers of the old woman's death. The hunters, upon returning to camp, found all the Indians suffering terribly from the plague, and ever since that time the Indians have been punished by the mosquitoes for their wickedness to their preserver, the Manitou.

Copernicus.

The Catholic World turns the tables upon Protestants, in regard to the discoveries of Copernicus, in the following style:

"Protestant writers generally indulge in the strange fancy that all the great minds of the period of the Reformation belong to their ranks; and it is almost a subject of surprise that Copernicus escaped an inscription on the monument raised to Luther at Worms. No doubt, however, at Luther's feet would have been an uncomfortable place for the man of whom we read in Luther's 'Table-Talk': 'People gave ear to an upstart astrologer, who strove to show that the earth revolves, not the heavens, nor the firmament, the sun and moon . . . But such is now the state of things. Whoever wishes to appear clever, must devise some new system which of all systems is, of course, the very best. This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy. But sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and not the earth.'

"Later on, Melancthon wrote in a work entitled 'De Initio Doctrinae Physicae': 'The eyes are witnesses that the heavens revolve in the space of twenty-four hours. But certain men, either from the love of novelty or to make a display of their ingenuity, have concluded that the earth moves, and they maintain that neither the eighth sphere nor the sun revolves. Now, although these clever dreamers find many ingenious things wherewith to recreate their minds, it is nevertheless a want of honesty and decency to assert such absurd notions publicly, and the example is pernicious. It is the part of a good mind to accept the truth as revealed by God, and to acquiesce in it.'

"Both reformers condemned the system of Copernicus, as opposed to the teaching of the sacred Scriptures. But the Catholic Church has always ignored that extravagant notion of inspiration, so justly censured by Lessing, according to which the Bible is to be received as a text-book even of astronomy, geography, and other natural sciences."

A Grave Warning.

An English army officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Chesney, at the end of a recent article in the *Fortnightly Review*, thus warns the ruling classes of England of what is before them: "I believe that, if our aristocracy refuse to heed such warnings as Lord Shaftesbury's, and go on, from one excess of luxury to another, their days given to butchering tame pigeons and tamer pheasants, their nights to applauding the antics of the offscouring of French harlotry on our stage; if our middle classes strive only to make money that they may imitate the vices of the noble; if our clergy continue to count their petty animosities above the religion they profess; if our shopkeepers take no heed of its teachings, but believe that a day spent in a chapel will atone for a week passed in fraud; if our writers make it their one object to stir up class against class, and increase the breaches worn by time in our political framework; if all classes neglect the brotherhood of humanity, which true Christianity and democracy, rightly understood, alike should teach—then sudden destruction may soon be upon us, and we shall deserve to

suffer it. Foreign occupation or intestine war—who would care greatly to survive either! Prussian martial law, or the rule of a convention, with Finlan in place of Robespierre, or order recovered by wading through one's countrymen's blood—who could wish to live long enough to see one of these alternatives closing the proud history of our land?"

Constantinople.

Decidedly the best and most luxurious manner of seeing Constantinople is to live on board a yacht in the Bosphorus. Anchored in the Golden Horn, away from the filth and unsavory odors of Pera, the clean deck of an English yacht affords the best possible point whence to observe, not only the unrivalled beauty of situation of the city of the sultan, but also the varieties of life and costume, which can nowhere else be seen to such perfection. The chief traffic of the city is carried on in the narrow waters which divide Europe from Asia, and wash the base of the hills on which stand the various quarters of Stamboul, Galata, Pera, Tophana, and Soutari, on the Asiatic shore. From sunrise to sunset the scene was ever lively, ever varying. Caiques of every description were constantly passing, from the crazy old fruit-boats laden with melons to the gorgeous twelve-oared barge of some rich pacha. Here a caique, decorated with crimson and gold, flies through the water, impelled by the strong arms of a dozen boatmen, clothed in splendidly-embroidered jackets and long, loose, white aleeves. In the bottom of the boat are seated, near the stern, half a dozen veiled women, in the brightest silk dresses, their dark eyes and fine features just traceable through the thin yashmaks, turned curiously toward the smart little yacht, from the stern of which the English flag almost droops into the water. On the raised place in the stern of the caique sits, cross-legged, a black-coated, red-capped pacha, the lord and master of the gayly-dressed ladies, gravely smoking a chibouque, or telling his beads, barely raising his eyes to the yacht as he passes. Sometimes, in the absence of their lord, a hideous black eunuch squats in the stern, the protector and the guardian of the morals of the fair Circassians who compose his master's harem. On the other side of the yacht a caique of enormous dimensions is slowly impelled by six or eight nearly naked negroes, down whose black faces the perspiration streams as they labor at the heavy oars, extreme poverty visible in their tattered garments and emaciated bodies. A number of peasants are crammed into the boat, of various nationalities and colors, Greek, Turk, and negro, returning to the villages on the Bosphorus from the markets of Stamboul and Pera.

Recent English Travellers.

Like most of our recent and more liberal travellers in America, Mr. Rae and the "Two Englishmen" exert themselves to do justice to the general refinement and gentle bearing of persons in the higher classes of American society, and to impress on readers that the piquant sketches which a departed generation of caricaturists produced as veritable portraits of transatlantic character exhibit none of the traits of either ordinary or exceptional Americans of the present day. "As for the repulsive Yankee of the novelist," Mr. Rae observes, "he is nowhere to be met in the flesh." The "Two Englishmen" go yet further, and, after insisting that, though he may have less stiffness and formality than his European equivalents, "the American gentleman is as good a type of his class as is to be found in London or Paris," they compare Eng-

lish with American morality, to the great advantage of the latter. "The morality of American society," they remark, "generally appears to us to be much more stern than that of the English. A man who transgresses the bounds of decorum in the United States is looked on as a black sheep, to be avoided by all respectable people, and not to be admitted within the precincts of a gentleman's house."

Varieties.

PRINCE GORTSCHAKOFF, whose name is again assuming prominence before the world, is now well advanced in years, being upward of seventy-two. For nearly fifty years he has been engaged in diplomatic duties, both at German courts and at home. During the Crimean War, he was ambassador to Austria, and soon after succeeded Count Nesselrode as foreign minister in the Russian cabinet. In that position he has managed several important questions with marked ability.

A war-correspondent, writing from Versailles, says, recently at night he was reading a letter in his room, when there was a clank of steel and a tramp of boots in the passage outside. A knock at the door. "Come in!" In came an officer of landwehr, followed by the Swiss maid with a candle in her hand. "I have come to warn you," he said, very courteously, in French, "that you must not approach the window with a light, nor are you to exhibit candles in the window. If you went to the window with a light, you might be shot by the sentry below. We must prevent signals being made."

The Japanese carpenters are ingenious workmen, and their work is done with marvellous neatness. A curious feature of houses is that they do not contain a nail, all their joists and timbers being dovetailed together by many ingenious devices; and the whole work, even to the rafters, is as smooth as if it had been polished with sandpaper.

Here is *Fun's* epigram on the statue of George Peabody, in London:

"To blow hot and blow cold in a couple of days,
Is one of the world's greatest failings!
While alive he was always envied with praise,
But now he's surrounded with railings."

The Lincolnshire (England) men still keep fighting the sea, as the Dutchmen have done for ages. The latest feat has been the enclosure of one thousand acres of valuable alluvial land in the parishes of Kirkton and Frampton. The embankment, about four miles in length, has been completed in six months.

The *Lancet* says: "It is a curious fact that of the passengers in the train which met with a terrible accident lately, all or very nearly all who were asleep at the time escaped uninjured—Nature's anesthetic insuring them not only against fractures and contusions, but even against the bad effects of shaking and concussion."

An Arkansas man, sentenced to be hanged, is in a bad way. The neighboring carpenters refuse to build the gallows, and the sheriff don't know how. The prisoner is a carpenter himself, and the sheriff has tried several times to have him build it, but he says "he'll be hanged if he will."

The only woman student in the Royal Academy, London, is Miss Hereford, who was smart enough to sign initials only to her letter of application. Nothing in the application arousing suspicion, the authorities formally accepted the applicant as a probationer student.

A suit of blue satin and black velvet, trimmed with Russia sable, blue gloves, black kid gaiters, inlaid with blue, and blue stockings and blue hat with ostrich plumes, compose what is called a stylish skating-costume in New York.

The fall of a large mass of rock between Heidelberg and Weisloch, in Germany, has brought to light the works of a silver-mine which was known to the ancient Romans. No silver-ore of any importance is left, but a very rich zinc-ore is met with in large quantities.

ANGRY OLD GENTLEMAN: "Now, you children, I'll tell you what it is; if you make any more noise in front of my house, I'll speak to that policeman."

CHORUS OF JUVENILES: "That policeman! Lor, we ain't afeerd of him! Why, that's father!"

Poets, who praise northeasters above all, Will winter "Honest Winter" doubtless call. Honest, indeed! Why, winter's no such thing—

Does it not often steal a March from spring!

The *Saturday Review* thinks that the next compiler of a history of inventions ought to include in his book some notice of the men who have discovered names for new magazines.

Flesh-colored gloves are the latest fashion. The advantage is, that at a little distance no one notices that you've got them on, except in Pittsburg.

It has been ascertained that there are in the United States sixty-one thousand ministers of all denominations. Averaging the salary, it is about seven hundred dollars.

Notwithstanding the war, each of the States engaged in the rebellion shows an actual increase in population since 1860.

The difference between a horse-dealer and a horse-stealer is not always a pronounced one, although it should be.

The running-time "across the continent" is now six days and twenty hours.

France just now is the "Gaul of bitterness."

The Museum.

FRAGMENTS of pottery have been discovered in caves, by the side of the remains of stone implements of the chase, thus indicating that the potter's art was employed in the earliest epoch of man. Water is a thing in constant use by man, whether he be civilized or savage, and among the first needs of the race must have been vessels in which this fluid could be carried. Shells would carry water, but shells cannot be found in every place. "But the clay," says Figuer, in his work on "Primitive Man," "which is used in making all kinds of pottery, from the very lowest kitchen utensil up to the most precious specimens of porcelain, may be said to exist almost everywhere. By softening it and kneading it with water, it may be moulded into vessels of all shapes. By mere exposure to the heat of the sun, these vessels will assume a certain amount of cohesion; for, as tradition tells us, the towers and palaces of ancient Nineveh were built entirely with bricks which had been baked in the sun."

"Yet the idea of hardening any clayey paste by means of the action of fire is so very simple, that we are not of opinion that pottery which had merely been baked in the sun was ever made use of to any great extent, even among primitive man. Mere chance, or the most casual observation, might have taught our earliest forefathers that a morsel of clay placed near a fire-hearth became hardened and altogether impenetrable to water, that is, that it formed a perfect specimen of pottery. Yet the art, though ancient, has not been universally found among mankind."

"Ere long, experience must have taught men certain improvements in the manufacture of pottery. Sand was added to the clay, so as to render it less subject to 'flying' on its first meeting the heat of the fire; next, dried straw was mixed with the clay in order to give it more coherence."

"In this way these rough vessels were produced, which were, of course, moulded with the hand, the remains of which bearing the imprints of the workman's fingers. They were only half-baked, on account of the slight intensity of

heat in the furnace which they were then obliged to make use of, which was nothing more than a wood-fire, burning in the open air, on a stone hearth. From these data we give a representation of the probable workshop of the earliest potter."



Primitive Man—The First Potter.

CONTENTS OF NO. 92, DECEMBER 31, 1870.

	PAGE		PAGE
"CHRISTMAS MORNING." (Illustration.)	777	WALLACE ON NATURAL SELECTION	792
VALKENBERG'S NINTH CHRISTMAS. By Albert Webster, Jr.	778	TABLE-TALK	794
TREE AND SERPENT WORSHIP	789	LITERARY NOTES	795
PICTURESQUE AMERICA. (Illustrated by Harry Fenn.) T. B. Thorpe	788	CHRISTMAS NOTES	795
POWELL VANDRAY'S LIFE: Part II. By Christian Reid	785	MISCELLANY	798
CHARLES LEVER. (With Portrait.) By George M. Towle	788	VARIETIES	799
BROKEN DOWN. By Daniel Connolly	790	THE MUSEUM. (Illustrated.)	799
THE DISEASES OF ROMANCE. By Henry M. Hurd, M. D.	791	EXTRA SHEET	799
		"A Garden in Pilatka, Florida," and "A Scene in St. Augustine, Florida."	

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